

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Congressional Medal of Honor, presentation
to Tibor Rubin—1450
Federal Emergency Management Agency—
1450
Homeland Security Council—1428
Hurricane Katrina recovery—1433
Louisiana, remarks to reporters in New
Orleans—1433
Mississippi, Governor's Commission on
Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal in
Gulfport—1432
Radio address—1427
Republican Jewish Coalition, 20th anniversary
luncheon—1434
Virginia, war on terror and preparations for
Hurricane Rita in Arlington—1443

Communications to Congress

North Atlantic Treaty Organization, letter
transmitting a report on the accession of
Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania,
Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia—1434

Communications to Congress—Continued

Terrorism, message on continuation of the
national emergency with respect to persons
who commit, threaten to commit, or
support—1443

Communications to Federal Agencies

Presidential Determination With Respect to
Foreign Governments' Efforts Regarding
Trafficking in Persons, memorandum—1441

Interviews With the News Media

Exchanges with reporters
Arlington, VA—1443
Cabinet Room—1428
Federal Emergency Management Agency—
1450
News conference with President Putin of
Russia, September 16—1419

(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

Editor's Note: The President was in Colorado Springs, CO, on September 23, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Contents—Continued

Joint Statements

President George W. Bush and Prime
Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand—
1430

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

Jordan, King Abdullah II—1449
Russia, President Putin—1419
Thailand, Prime Minister Thaksin—1430

Notices

Continuation of the National Emergency With
Respect to Persons Who Commit, Threaten
To Commit, or Support Terrorism—1442

Proclamations

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day,
Constitution Week—1425
Family Day—1426

Proclamations—Continued

Gold Star Mother's Day—1440
National Farm Safety and Health Week—
1425

Statements by the President

Afghanistan, parliamentary elections—1428
Death of Simon Wiesenthal—1434
National Commission on Election Reform,
recommendations—1432

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—1456
Checklist of White House press releases—
1455
Digest of other White House
announcements—1452
Nominations submitted to the Senate—1454

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Week Ending Friday, September 23, 2005

**The President's News Conference
With President Vladimir Putin of
Russia**

September 16, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all. Please be seated. I'm pleased to welcome my friend Vladimir Putin back to the White House. We just had a constructive meeting and a candid conversation. I told the President how much I enjoyed visiting Russia early this year and how much I'm looking forward to going back to Russia for the G-8.

I also thanked President Putin—Vladimir—for Russia's offers of assistance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. It meant a lot to know that you cared enough to send critical supplies, and our country really appreciates it. People are going through some tough times down there, and I think it lifts their spirits to know that not only Americans but Russians care about their future.

We've got a strong ally in Russia in fighting the war on terror. You know, it was about 4 years ago that our country got attacked; 1 year ago, there was Beslan, both of them brutal attacks, both of them attacks by people who have no regard for innocent life. And we understand we have a duty to protect our citizens and to work together and to do everything we can to stop the killing. That's why we hold office.

And I appreciate you very much and your understanding of this war on terror. We also understand that we've got to work to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We understand the stakes, that people who kill in cold blood, if they have weapons of mass destruction, will kill in cold blood on a massive scale. And I want to appreciate you for your understanding and thank you for your understanding of that.

We both signed the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was a positive statement by the world. We discussed our efforts to work

together in Iran and North Korea. We both—we have the same goal. We don't want the Iranians to have nuclear weapons, and we don't want the North Koreans to have nuclear weapons. We talked about ways to achieve those goals.

We talked about the need to improve nuclear security. This year we reached a milestone in nonproliferation cooperation by completing the conversion of 10,000 Russian nuclear warheads into peaceful fuel for U.S. power reactors. And I appreciate very much that sense of cooperation. That's good for the world to see.

We talked about our economic relationship. Russia has got a growing economy. We have products that they want, and they've got products that we want, like energy. And it's necessary for us to have a good economic relationship, one where we resolve our differences in a wise way. I told Vladimir that I'm very interested in seeing if we can't get—complete the negotiations for Russia's entry into the WTO, the World Trade Organization, by the end of this year.

As we strengthen our economic ties, we'll work to advance freedom and democracy in our respective countries and around the world. Russia has been a strong partner of the United States and will be even a stronger partner as the reforms that President Vladimir Putin has talked about are implemented, rule of law and the ability for people to express themselves in an open way in Russia.

I don't know how many visits we've had. I haven't been counting them because I've run out of fingers on my hands, but there's been a lot. And every time I visit and talk with President Putin, I—our relationship becomes stronger. And I want to thank you for that. Thank you for coming to the White House to visit.

Welcome.

President Putin. Thank you very much. Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, first and foremost, I'd like to thank the President for

invitation to visit the White House. And at the outset, allow me to relate the words of most sincere compassion and support to the American people with regards to the strikes of Mother Nature, that's Katrina Hurricane, which caused the death of many human lives and caused serious destruction. Believe us, we are sincerely and genuinely having the feeling of compassion with that tragedy, with you.

Russia, in the very first hours after the tragedy, proposed its support. Of course, this aid is in no comparison with the scale—the plan which was laid down yesterday by the President of U.S. to restore that part of the country. But that was sincere support, and we wanted to shore up morally the people which they currently need most—that's medications. That's the first need objects. And I must say, these events, to the entire world, have become a serious lesson not only for the U.S. It's not an accident that we have paid a lot of attention today and while we had meetings in New York, since it's a global catastrophe—global, absolutely global catastrophe, which must make us think.

And today I told it to George, to ourselves in Russia, we too will draw our conclusions regarding organization of activities of services related to averting such catastrophes with efficient response to the similar catastrophes which are, indeed, of a global nature. This is precisely why we've discussed these tragic events and our cooperation as regards averting of this—[inaudible]—catastrophes, infectious disease, and so forth. I'm sure if we pool our effort, then our activities will become more efficient.

In general, the qualitative new level of interaction between our two countries allows to efficiently address these breakthrough strategic tasks in many spheres of our interaction. And today's meeting was another confirmation of that. The traditional, high priority subjects of our interaction is antiterrorist cooperation of U.S. and Russia. We have agreed to enhance the bilateral coordination, including on the level of the working group to combat terrorism.

Hereby, we believe that special attention should be paid to a joint effort to avert terrorist activities, generally and, of course, with the possible use by terrorists of weapons of

mass destruction. You know that a relevant decision has been adopted in New York, in the United Nations organization.

Significant attention was paid to the subject of nonproliferation, and here we have discussed the North Korean problem and the Iranian nuclear dossier. And I must say that our positions are very close with the American partners here. We will continue to coordinate our work. On our part, I'd like to point out, that the potential of diplomatic solutions to all these questions is far from being exhausted, and we'll undertake all the steps necessary to settle all these problems and issues, not to aggravate them, not to bring them to extremalities.

We have in detail discussed other crisis-related situations in the world, and I must say that on all these issues, our foreign policy agencies are in touch constantly.

We have discussed also the upcoming meeting of G-8 group, and I'm thankful to George for some of his recommendations. We will continue with our partners to be in touch, closely coordinating preparation of this event and working out the agenda, so that the meeting of G-8 in the Russian Federation be organized at high-level quality but also would take the torch and uphold it and also bring some fresh breath as regards the relevance of all the subjects as they are considered by our countries and the entire world.

We also discussed today the situation of the post-Soviet Union space. Our countries have joint interests in maintaining stability and economic prosperity of this vast territory. The position of Russia is well known. We come out for the consistent advancement of integrational process within the frameworks of this community of independent states, with straight respect to sovereignty of all our neighbors, their own right, without pressure from outside, to choose their mode of national development. And we will coordinate our activities with all our partners on that one.

In the course of negotiations, we have also assessed the course of fulfillment of all—of instructions given on Russia-U.S. relations, and I'd like to point out the economic ties

and this development President just mentioned, the fact that we have a mutual interest towards each other, including as regards the growing Russia economy and in the sector of energy. We have discussed that in detail.

Basically, this is always the subject of our bilateral meetings. We have vast reserves to further develop our economic interaction, and first and foremost, as regards energy dialog, high technologies, space research, and you know that over the past years, a lot has been done both by U.S. and the Russian Federation in this area jointly.

We have discussed the possibility of accession of WTO by Russia. We discussed that in further detail, and I'm very thankful to the President of the U.S. for understanding of our interests during the negotiation process, and I hope that at the expert level, too, our specialists will be able to ultimately find some practical solutions, even if the questions they have to coordinate are quite a few. But the positive dynamics is there, and I would like to express the hope that it will result in specific outcomes.

And in conclusion, I'd like to underscore one more time that we are convinced with the President that the firm basis of the Russia-U.S. partnership should be based on the broad ties of our societies, citizens, civil societies. And after this meeting in the White House, we will have a chance to talk with the leaders of the American companies. And I hope that those meetings will also be of help and be useful, since we will discuss specific projects of participation of major U.S. companies in the Russian economy, first and foremost, in the energy sphere.

And I'd like to thank, one more time, the U.S. President that even if very difficult situation is known right now, where Mother Nature has revealed itself, well, he has found it possible to materialize our agreements and this meeting has occurred, even if it was clear that constantly with his mind, he is out there with his thoughts, with those people, with those problems. But still, it was possible to run through the entire agenda. We have discussed all the questions there. We have agreed on the immediate steps in future, as regards to interaction between U.S. and Russian Federation. And I hope this will be a

good impulse for our cooperation in all those spheres I have just enumerated.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. We'll take two questions a side, starting with Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Hurricane Katrina Recovery/National Debt

Q. Mr. President, with billions of dollars flowing out of Washington for hurricane relief, some Republicans are worried that you're writing a blank check that will have to be paid by future generations. Who is going to have to pay for this recovery, and what's it going to do to the national debt?

President Bush. First of all, for our citizens who haven't seen what I've seen—you've seen what I've seen—it's—we lost a lot of life and a lot of property. I mean, the area destroyed by the storm is the size of Great Britain. And we've got whole towns just completely flattened, just wiped out. And one of our great cities, New Orleans, is—a lot of it is underwater. And by "underwater," I mean water over the rooftops. And those homes will be destroyed. Thousands of people won't have homes. And so this is an enormous task to help the region start growing again.

One of the commitments that I made last night is for the Federal Government to fund a significant portion of the infrastructure repair and rebuilding, in other words, our bridges and our roads, our schools. The water systems are ruined. The sewer system is ruined. And I meant that when I said we will do that. Part of the recovery is to make sure there's an infrastructure that works.

Yesterday in New Orleans, for example, the mayor was so thrilled that a portion of New Orleans, the French Quarter, for example, has got lights and sewers—you can't drink the water, but the sewer system works. In other words, he's beginning to see some life. And it just reminded me that as we can get the infrastructure up and running as quickly as possible, get the debris cleared, get the infrastructure up and running, then life will begin.

And so, you bet, it's going to cost money. But I'm confident we can handle it, and I'm confident we can handle our other priorities.

It's going to mean that we're going to have to make sure we cut unnecessary spending. It's going to mean we don't do—we've got to maintain economic growth, and therefore we should not raise taxes. Our working people have had to pay a tax, in essence, by higher gasoline prices. And we don't need to be taking more money out of their pocket. And as we spend the money, we got to make sure we spend it wisely. And so we're going to have inspectors general overseeing the expenditure of the money.

Our OMB will work with Congress to figure out where we need to offset when we need to offset, so that we can manage not only to maintain economic growth and vitality but to be able to spend that which is necessary to help this region get back on its feet. So it's a big role for the Federal Government.

There's a big role for private sector. And that's why I call for economic growth zones, an economic enterprise zone. Look, there's not going to be any revenues coming out of that area for a while anyway, so we might as well give them good tax relief in order to get jobs there and investment there. It makes sense. The entrepreneurial spirit is what's going to help lift this part of the world up. So we've got a—I started laying out the outlines of a plan, and it's one that we want to work with Congress on.

Q. What will it cost?

President Bush. Well, it's going to cost whatever it costs. We're going to be wise about the money we spend. I mean, you're—we haven't totaled up all the bridges and highways, but I said we'll make a commitment to rebuild the infrastructure and—to help rebuild the infrastructure. We're also spending money on—\$2,000 a family to help these people get back on their feet. There's a variety of programs. The key question is to make sure the costs are wisely spent, and that we work with Congress to make sure that we are able to manage our budget in a wise way. And that is going to mean cutting other programs.

Do you want to call on somebody?

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. The Russian-U.S. relationship largely is based on your good personal relations. In year 2008, you both will cease to be Presi-

dents. So have you laid any guarantees so that U.S.-Russia relationship could go on not worse than it does right now?

President Bush. That's a good question.

President Putin. Are they already firing us? We still want to work. [Laughter] To be serious, well, I might say that guarantees of the positive development of the U.S.-Russia relations are based on the mutual interests to develop such relations between the two countries. With their steps, leaders can either help such an objective processes of development or be an impediment. We try to do whatever it takes to support this process. So far, we are responsible and will continue to do so.

President Bush. For example, we will leave behind some legacies: the Moscow Treaty, which commits both countries to reducing our nuclear warheads; trade. In other words, as our countries and different companies begin to invest—companies begin to invest in both countries, that leaves behind a legacy that will be hard for future governments to undo. There's kind of a strategic dialog. We get in habits sometimes, and the idea of setting a way for governments to talk to each other at different levels of government is a good legacy.

And so, we do have 3 more years, which I found out is a long period of time. And we'll be able to do more together that people—that future governments will view as a way to move forward to keep the peace and to be—to deal with big issues in a complex world.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Response to Future U.S. Disasters/Iran

Q. Last night you said that greater Federal involvement and troops may be required in future disasters. Could you elaborate on that a little bit? And were you able to convince President Putin on the need to send Iran to the Security Council? Sorry to do a two-part.

President Bush. No, that's—hit me with a two-part question.

First, on Iran, we agree that the Iranians should not have a nuclear weapon. That's important for people to understand. When you share the same goal, it means, as you work diplomatically, you're working toward that goal.

Secondly, I am confident that the world will see to it that Iran goes to the U.N. Security Council if it does not live up to its agreements. And when that referral will happen is a matter of diplomacy. And that's what we talked about. We talked about how to deal with this situation diplomatically.

The first part of the question—oh, was how to deal with disasters.

Q. Federal involvement in disasters.

President Bush. Yes. I don't want to prejudge the commission's—what do they call it, the bipartisan commission that is set up in Congress. I don't want to prejudge their findings. But I do think they ought to seriously consider the fact that there are—a storm, for example, of a certain category, which will require an overwhelming response by Government that can only be provided by, say, the United States military through NORTHCOM, because of its ability to muster logistical—logistics and supplies so quickly. And that's what I want Congress to consider, and I think it's very important that Congress consider this.

It's important for us to learn from the storm what could have been done better, for example, and apply that to other types of situations, such as a pandemic. At the U.N., I talked about avian flu; we need to take it seriously. I talked to Vladimir about avian flu; I talked to other world leaders about the potential outbreak of avian flu. If avian flu were to hit this country, do we have the proper response mechanisms? Does the Federal Government have the authorities necessary to make certain decisions? And this storm will give us an opportunity to review all different types of circumstance to make sure that the President has the capacity to react. And that's what I was referring to. I wasn't drawing any conclusions; I was just suggesting that this be a matter of debate and discussion with the bipartisan commission that is going to be set up there, with Democrats and Republican Senators and Congressmen.

President Putin. As regards to the Iranian subject, I might as well say that the our position is very clear and understandable. We support all of the agreements on non-proliferation, which includes Iran among others, fully, and we've always, in this regard,

been open with our partners, transparent completely. And yesterday in the meeting with the President of Iran, we directly told him so. And of course, we are against the fact that Iran would become a nuclear power, and we'll continue to do so in future, under any circumstances.

Now, as regards as to how we can control the situation, there are many ways and means to do so. We wouldn't like our—inaccurate steps could bring us to the situation similar to that one in the Korean Peninsula. We're in touch with all the partners in the process with the European-3, with the U.S. We have understanding of what we need to do, and I hope that our activities will be coordinated and will bring positive results.

Once again, yesterday I heard from the Iranian leader, a statement that Iran does not seek to acquire nuclear weapons. That's the first thing I wanted to share with you.

Now—and if you allow me, today, this way or the other, still we'll come back—and for quite a while, I guess, in future, too—to the fact of this horrible catastrophe, which was passed on to the soil of the U.S., having to do with this Hurricane Katrina. If, George, you don't mind, I would come back to this first question, which relates to the fact that we are taking away money from the future generation pockets. In the Soviet Union, for many decades, we lived under the motto: We need to think about the future generation. But we never thought about the existing, current, present generations. And at the end of the day, we have destroyed the country, not thinking about the people living today.

Therefore, of course, yes, we need to spend money. There is no two ways about it. And I believe that both U.S. and we in Russia and in other countries of the world, we've been analyzing, all of us, what has transpired, how the state and the bodies responded to the current events. Many of us will draw their conclusions as regards restructuring the activities of the relevant services and bodies of the state which ought to minimize the repercussions of such catastrophes.

President Bush. Final question.

Emerging Democracies

Q. The question to Mr. President of the U.S. Mr. President, while talking in the United Nations organization, you, probably conscientiously in a row—talking about the strive for the road to democracy—mentioned such countries as Afghanistan, Iran, Georgia, Ukraine, and Iraq. Do you believe the situation politically in this country is similar?

And to you, Mr. President, since we're talking about it, what is your assessment, in Iraq and in Ukraine, please? Thank you.

President Bush. Let me make sure I understand your question. Do I believe the country in—the situation in our country is similar to their countries?

Q. You spoke at the United Nations about the strive for democracy—

President Bush. Right.

Q. —and you—

President Bush. I remember that.

Q. And you mentioned Georgia, Ukraine, Iraq, Afghanistan—just do you think the situation in these countries is similar?

President Bush. Oh. Well, no, I think they're all different. I think, as a matter of fact, democracy tends to reflect the cultures and histories of each different country. I do think, though, they're bound by some common principles, one that governments that are elected by the people tend to respond to the people, that they've got minority rights and rule of law. But they're all on different stages of the development of democracy.

Democracy just doesn't happen. It grows. It takes a while. It's the experience of our country. It's the experience of the Russian Federation. I mean, democracies take on the customs and habits of the particular people, and they mature. And so they're at different stages. I mean, clearly, Iraq is a struggling democracy. But one thing is for certain: The people have made their mind about what they want. They want democracy: 8.5 million Iraqis went to the polls, see, and they've got a constitution that's been written. It wasn't written under bayonet or under the barrel of a gun. It was written by people from different factions of the society that have come together. And it will be voted on soon. And then there will be another election. So this is an emerging democracy, and it's different from a more mature democracy.

Q. Can I follow up?

President Bush. No. [Laughter] Got to keep order and discipline. Right, Steve?

President Putin. On the last question about Iraq and Ukraine—Iraq, we are aware of the situation in Iraq. Unfortunately, we are facing constant violence, and that relates to known factors having to do with the upcoming referendum on constitution there. I believe that if it will be possible to get constitution, this will be a good, strong step forward to achieve stability in that country.

In my opinion, it will be only possible if the main political forces, ethnic groups, will get a sense that it's their own constitution. If this document will be confirmed, agreed upon by the overwhelming segments of the population, if the current leadership makes a strong case and convinces population that this constitution is satisfactory to all, it will maintain territorial integrity, will take into account the interests of major minority groups, then it will be a real step forward in settlement. And we hope very much that will occur.

Now, as regards Ukraine, well, what can be said here? The political crisis, as I said recently in Berlin, the situation is under control of the President.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you. Good job.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:59 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. President Putin and some reporters spoke in Russian, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA. President Putin referred to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran; and President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7932—Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, Constitution Week, 2005

September 16, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than two centuries after our Founding Fathers gathered in 1787 in Philadelphia, our Nation continues to be guided by the Constitution they drafted.

The Constitution of the United States reflects our ideals and establishes a practical system of government. It provides for three separate branches—the legislative, the executive, and the judicial—with defined responsibilities and with checks and balances among the branches. Under our Constitution, both the Federal Government and the State governments advance the will of the people through the people's representatives. To protect the rights of our citizens and maintain the rule of law, Article III of the Constitution provides for a judiciary of independent judges who have life tenure.

These fundamental principles—separation of powers, federalism, and an independent judiciary—have endured, and they have been essential to our Nation's progress toward equal justice and liberty for all. On Constitution Day and Citizenship Day and during Constitution Week, we celebrate the genius of our Constitution and reaffirm our commitment to its stated purposes: “to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.”

In remembrance of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the Americans who strive to uphold the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 106, as amended), designated September 17 as “Constitution Day and Citizenship Day,” and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 108, as amended), requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as “Constitution Week.”

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 2005, as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, and September 17 through September 23, 2005, as Constitution Week. I encourage Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, social, and educational organizations, to conduct ceremonies and programs that celebrate our Constitution and reaffirm our rights and obligations as citizens of our great Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 20, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 21. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7933—National Farm Safety and Health Week, 2005

September 16, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As stewards of our natural resources, farmers and ranchers play a crucial role in keeping our Nation strong. This year's theme for National Farm Safety and Health Week, “Harvesting Safety and Health,” encourages those in the agriculture industry to practice and promote safe working conditions and reminds all Americans of the vital contributions of farmers and ranchers to our country.

Our farming communities embody the American values of hard work, faith, love of family, and love of country. Their skill and dedication feed, clothe, and provide energy for Americans and others around the world.

Agricultural workers face one of the most hazardous work environments in America. Farmers and ranchers operate heavy machinery, work in inclement weather, and tend

livestock. Because of these risks, taking safety precautions is vital for agricultural workers. By implementing preventive measures and increasing our knowledge of first aid, we can greatly reduce many hazards of farm and ranch labor. Utilizing safety features and keeping children from working or playing in potentially hazardous areas also can limit injuries and help farmers and ranchers protect their families.

Our farmers and ranchers help keep our Nation strong and advance the opportunities that come from freedom. During National Farm Safety and Health Week, we recognize the significant contributions of farmers and ranchers to our Nation and encourage the further development of work environments that will ensure their safety.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 18 through September 24, 2005, as National Farm Safety and Health Week. I call upon the agencies, organizations, and businesses that serve America's agricultural workers to continue strengthening their commitment to promoting farm safety and health programs. I also urge all Americans to recognize the men and women cultivating our land who contribute to the vitality and prosperity of our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 20, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 21. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7934—Family Day, 2005

September 16, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Families are a source of hope, stability, and love. On Family Day, we celebrate the special bonds that link children and parents, and we recognize the importance of parental involvement in the lives of their children. By providing guidance, support, and unconditional love, families help shape the character and future of our Nation.

In a free and compassionate society, the public good depends upon the private character of our citizens. That character is formed and shaped from a child's earliest days through the love and guidance of family. Families help children understand the difference between right and wrong and the importance of making good choices. Regular family activities allow parents to be actively involved in the lives of their children and instill important values of honesty, compassion, and respect for others. By raising young people in a loving and secure environment, parents help them develop into successful adults and responsible citizens.

Parents and family are a bedrock of love and support, and my Administration is committed to strengthening families. My 2006 budget proposes \$240 million for initiatives that promote responsible fatherhood and encourage healthy marriages. Through competitive grants to State-based programs and faith-based and community organizations, we are helping support their good work. As parents continue to raise healthy children, we can all help young people realize a bright and promising future.

Strong families are the cornerstone of a strong America, and the well-being of families is a shared priority for all Americans. As we support families, we help build a Nation of opportunity and hope.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 26,

2005, as Family Day. I call on the people of the United States to observe this day by spending time with family members and reaffirming the important relationship between parents and children and the vital role that families play in our society.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 20, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 21. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

September 17, 2005

Good morning. This week I visited Mississippi and Louisiana and reported to the Nation on our strategy to help our neighbors in these devastated areas recover and rebuild. In the aftermath of Katrina, we have seen our fellow citizens uprooted from their homes, searching for loved ones, and grieving for the dead. These scenes have touched our hearts and moved our whole Nation to action. And the outpouring of compassion has sent a clear message to the victims of this storm: Our whole Nation cares about you; you are not alone.

The recovery of the gulf coast region will be one of the largest reconstruction efforts the world has ever seen. And I have made a pledge of the American people: Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will help our citizens rebuild their communities and their lives.

Our strategy rests on three commitments. Our first commitment is to meet the immediate needs of those who had to flee their homes and leave all their possessions behind. As of this week, more than 500,000 evacuee families have gotten emergency help to pay for food, clothing, and other essentials, and they will receive broader help in the future. I've asked for and the Congress has provided

more than \$60 billion, an unprecedented response to an unprecedented crisis.

Our second commitment is to help the citizens of the gulf coast put their lives back together and rebuild their communities. Our goal is to get people out of shelters by the middle of October. So we're providing direct assistance to evacuees that will allow them to rent apartments, and we're beginning to bring in mobile homes and trailers for temporary use in affected areas. We will also help provide housing for the many workers who will rebuild cities in the region so that reconstruction can move forward quickly.

To relieve the burden on local health care facilities in the disaster areas, we're sending extra doctors and nurses and setting up well-supplied temporary community health centers. A number of States have taken in evacuees and shown them great compassion, admitting children to school and providing health care. So I'll work with Congress to ensure the States are reimbursed for these extra expenses.

Our third commitment is to ensure that the communities we rebuild emerge better and stronger. Out of this tragedy comes an opportunity to harness the good and gracious spirit of America and deliver new hope to neighborhoods that were suffering before the storm. Our reconstruction efforts will be guided by certain principles: When cities are rebuilt, those cities should have many new businesses, including minority-owned businesses. When houses are rebuilt, more families should own, not rent, those houses.

To achieve these aims I've proposed the creation of a Gulf Opportunity Zone in the disaster area, with immediate tax relief and other incentives for job-creating investment. And to encourage homeownership, I have proposed a new urban homesteading act, which would identify property in the region owned by the Federal Government and provide lots to low-income citizens free of charge, through a lottery. In return, they would pledge to build on the lot with either a mortgage or help from a charitable organization like Habitat for Humanity.

As we rebuild homes and businesses, we will renew our promise to be the land of

equality and decency. And one day, Americans will look back at the response to Hurricane Katrina and say that our country grew not only in prosperity but also in character and justice.

Our citizens have responded to this tragedy with action and prayer. We ask God's comfort for the men and women who have suffered so much. We pray that the missing find safe return and those who were lost find holy rest. And we sought the strength of the Almighty for the difficult work that lies ahead.

In the life of our Nation, we have seen that wondrous things are possible when we act with God's grace. From the rubble of destroyed homes, we can see the beginnings of vibrant new neighborhoods. From the despair of lives torn asunder, we can see the hope of rebirth. And from the depth of darkness, we can see a bright dawn emerging over the gulf coast and the great city of New Orleans.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on September 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Parliamentary Elections in Afghanistan

September 18, 2005

I congratulate the Afghan people and Afghan Government for today's successful parliamentary elections, which are a major step forward in Afghanistan's development as a democratic state governed by the rule of law. Braving deadly attacks and threats of violence, Afghans voted in large numbers for representatives to their new National Assembly and Provincial Councils. We commend the tremendous progress that the Afghan people have made in recent years, and we pledge the full support of the United States as Afghanistan acts to meet the new challenges ahead.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Homeland Security Council and an Exchange With Reporters

September 19, 2005

The President. I just met with my Homeland Security Council to discuss ongoing relief efforts in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. I have made it clear that I believe it's a national security matter for people to review emergency plans. And so, therefore, I've instructed Secretary Chertoff and folks around this table to work with our local counterparts to make sure that we've got emergency plans in place that will deal with significant disaster. And for the local folks, I urge them to cooperate in a review of these plans. It's important.

Secondly, one of the things that I heard loud and clear on my travels down there was that people are concerned about redtape. And one of the big concerns for the mayors and the Governor of Mississippi, in particular, and the mayors along the gulf coast, was this issue about debris removal—who's responsible, how can we get it done in an effective way. And I want to thank the Secretary for working with Governor Barbour on this issue to expedite a process by which we can start getting some of this debris removed from a part of our country that was just wiped out by this storm; I mean, there are piles and piles of homes and buildings just in rubble. And in order to help this region get rebuilt, first things first, and that's to get rid of the debris. And so we've got a plan in place to cut through the redtape and get this done in an effective way.

On another matter, a couple of other matters—one, I want to congratulate the people of Afghanistan for showing up at the polls and defying the Taliban and those who threaten their lives and say, look, you know, these people supported democracy. It's just another step on their road toward a stable democracy, and we congratulate them.

And as well, I want to welcome the comments of the OPEC and non-OPEC nations, talking about making sure they get enough supply on the markets to help, hopefully, affect the world price of crude oil. I have been concerned about the price at the pump that our folks are paying. Part of that was caused

by the disruptions of Hurricane Katrina. We dealt with that by suspending rules and regulations that enable us to import more gasoline. But part of the cost of gasoline is a result of high crude oil prices, and one way to affect those prices is to conserve, and the other way is to encourage an increased supply. And so I want to thank those countries that are trying to figure out how to get more supply on the market to help relieve some of the pressure.

Be glad to answer some questions. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press] and Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters] will be asking questions today.

New Orleans

Q. Thank you, sir. Thank you. Mayor Nagin in New Orleans has invited people to start returning to that city, when there are lots of Federal officials who feel that it's not safe to do so. Do you feel like you need to step in?

The President. Well, we have made our position very clear. Admiral Allen has made the position very clear, of this Government, and that is that we share the goal of the mayor, but we have got concerns. There are environmental concerns, which Administrator Johnson shared with us today.

Let me give you a real concern that I think everybody ought to pay attention to, and that is this Tropical Storm Rita, which now looks like it's going to head out into the gulf and could track Katrina, or it could head further to the west. But nevertheless, there is deep concern about this storm causing more flooding in New Orleans.

And so Admiral Allen has reflected our—the concerns of this administration. And we want to work with the mayor. The mayor is working hard. The mayor has got this dream about having a city up and running, and we share that dream. But we also want to be realistic about some of the hurdles and obstacles that we all confront in repopulating New Orleans.

Q. Will you express that concern yourself to the mayor?

The President. Well, I just did, but, as well—absolutely. Secretary—"Secretary," I call—Andy Card, former Secretary, and now Chief of Staff Card is reaching out to him—has reached out to him earlier. But listen,

Admiral Allen is our man on the ground. Admiral Allen speaks for the administration. He is—and the mayor knows our position. But I repeat, and the mayor needs to hear it, and so do the people of New Orleans, our objective—listen, I went there, and stood in Jackson Square to say, we want this city to re-emerge. As I said, I can't imagine America without a vibrant New Orleans. It's just a matter of timing, and there's issues to be dealt with. If it were to rain a lot, there is concern from the Army Corps of Engineers that the levees might break. And so, therefore, we're cautious about encouraging people to return at this moment of history.

Adam.

North Korea

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Given what you've said in the past about North Korea's record of noncompliance, what makes you think that this time North Korea will abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons?

The President. Five nations, in working with North Korea, have come up with a formula which we all hope works. Five nations have spoken and said it is not in the world's interest that North Korea have a nuclear weapon. And now there's a way forward. And part of the way forward is for the North Koreans to understand that we're serious about this and that we expect there to be a verifiable process. In other words, they have said, in principle, that they will abandon their weapons programs. And what we have said is, "Great, that's a wonderful step forward, but now we've got to verify whether or not that happens."

It was a positive step yesterday. It was a step forward in making this world a more secure place. And I want to thank our other partners in the six-party dialog, you know, by working together. The question is, over time, will all parties adhere to the agreement?

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand

September 19, 2005

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of Thailand back to the—to Washington. Thank you for coming, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Thaksin. Thank you.

President Bush. Laura and I were just talking the other evening about what a wonderful visit we had to your country when you hosted APEC. It's reminded me—when I was thinking about that visit, reminded me of our close friendship. The Prime Minister is a person who believes in markets and free enterprise and freedom. And I'm really, really pleased he's here.

We had a—we talked about a lot of subjects. One subject that I'm particularly interested in is avian flu and the need for our countries to work together. Thailand is a leader in putting systems in place that will track the virus as it attacks different birds and watches very carefully to make sure that there's no bird-to-human transmission in his country. He's willing to work in the neighborhood, for which I'm grateful. All of us need to be mindful of this potentially devastating disease. And we've got a good friend and a very thoughtful leader when it comes to that subject.

We talked about North Korea. We talked about the neighborhood. We talked about our economies. We would like to get a free trade agreement concluded here as quickly as possible, and the Prime Minister made that very clear to me.

All in all, it was a very good visit, covering a lot of subjects, and I'm not surprised, because I'm visiting with a good friend.

So, welcome, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Thaksin. Thank you, Mr. President. It's my pleasure to visit Washington, DC, again. It's my third time during Prime Ministership—and this trip I have been—discussed with the President about the bilateral and also the regional—in Asia as well. And we had a very good conversation.

I committed to President Bush that we are pressing ahead with the FTA, and also we will work closely with U.S. by drafting the

plan of action in the cooperation between our two countries and also with the third country as well if the two countries would like to work together with, in helping or in working with other countries.

I also want to welcome the President to meet with the ASEAN seven during APEC meeting in November in Korea.

President Bush. Finally, I do want to thank the Prime Minister and His Majesty for sending relief supplies to our folks that have been affected by Hurricane Katrina. This good country has just come through a tsunami, and they're on their way to recovery. And yet they were able to, through their—because of their generous hearts, ship help. And so thanks very much, and please thank His Majesty for his generous contribution to the folks down there.

Thank you, sir. Appreciate it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to King Phumiphon Adunyadet of Thailand.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand

September 19, 2005

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat met today to reaffirm the strength of the U.S.-Thai alliance and the importance of bilateral cooperation in regional and global affairs. Both leaders recognized the special and enduring bonds between the two countries as well as between the American and Thai people, demonstrated most recently by the close cooperation following last December's devastating tsunami and after Hurricane Katrina. President Bush expressed his admiration for the resilience and determination of the Thai people and government in rebuilding areas affected by the tsunami and pledged continued U.S. assistance. The President noted Thailand's effort to mobilize support for an establishment of a regional tsunami early warning system.

Prime Minister Thaksin once again expressed his profound condolences for American casualties and the devastation from Hurricane Katrina. President Bush expressed his

appreciation for His Majesty the King of Thailand's donations for the people affected by Hurricane Katrina and for Thailand's dispatch of emergency relief supplies.

The two leaders welcomed the expanding and deepening security cooperation that has followed Thailand's designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally and discussed plans to inaugurate a senior-level bilateral dialogue on strategic and security issues in Bangkok this fall. They also directed their officials to work together on a comprehensive Plan of Action covering all major areas of cooperation, aiming to serve as a roadmap to maximize the benefits arising from close and productive U.S.-Thai relations. In that context, the two leaders emphasized the importance of tri-lateral cooperation to support economic and social development in countries where both the U.S. and Thailand are working.

The two leaders discussed the importance of stepping up efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and pledged to explore cooperation in the Proliferation Security Initiative. The President noted the outstanding cooperation by U.S. and Thai military forces in this year's Cobra Gold joint exercises.

Both leaders expressed concern over current trends in Burma. Stressing their shared objectives of promoting democracy and national reconciliation in Burma, both sides agreed to have closer consultations on this matter. The two leaders noted that they had called for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other jailed political activists when they met in 2003 and reiterated that this step was necessary for a credible process of political dialogue for all parties.

Prime Minister Thaksin briefed President Bush on Bangkok's efforts to deal with the violence in southern Thailand while preserving the democratic freedom that has made Thailand a leader in Southeast Asia. The President commended the Prime Minister's creation of a National Reconciliation Commission aimed at developing a broad-based approach to the South that combines security, equitable development, and protection for basic rights.

The two leaders agreed to make vigorous efforts to reach conclusion on the U.S.-Thai Free Trade Agreement (FTA) next year.

They expressed satisfaction with the fourth round of talks held in Montana in July and looked forward to the 5th round next week in Hawaii. President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin agreed that the FTA must be beneficial to the people of both countries and comprehensive in its mandate, and it must address issues of importance to both sides.

The two leaders welcomed the signing of an Air Transport Agreement between the two countries that would provide substantial benefits to travelers and businesses and further expand bilateral economic linkages.

As the coordinator for ASEAN dialogue with the United States, Thailand plays a key role in U.S. engagement in Southeast Asia. President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin discussed regional and development issues and ways to enhance U.S.-Thai cooperation in regional forums, particularly the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences, as well as the vital nexus of economic, trade, and security issues at APEC. President Bush noted that he was looking forward to meeting jointly with ASEAN members of APEC at the Leaders' Meeting in Busan this November. The two leaders also expressed their support for the Aceh peace agreement underway in Indonesia and praised the serious efforts of both sides in achieving such a breakthrough.

Both leaders underscored the importance of combating infectious diseases and the urgency of addressing avian flu in particular. President Bush applauded Prime Minister Thaksin's leadership in responding to outbreaks in his country. The two leaders agreed on the critical importance of transparency, close monitoring, and cooperation across sectors and with international health organizations by all countries in the region. They pledged to intensify cooperation on global efforts to respond to this critical emerging issue.

President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin agreed on the potential for even greater coordination on areas of mutual concern and overlapping interest and looked forward to meeting again in November at APEC.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

**Statement on the Recommendations
of the National Commission on
Election Reform**

September 19, 2005

I greatly appreciate the excellent work of the bipartisan commission in identifying ways to strengthen the integrity of the voting process. It is critical to maintain America's trust in our election system, and I look forward to reviewing this report and working with Congress on the recommendations.

**Remarks to the Governor's
Commission on Recovery,
Rebuilding, and Renewal in
Gulfport, Mississippi**

September 20, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks. Well, thanks for having me—again. A couple of things, observations: Every time I come back here, I see progress. You know, sometimes when you're so close to the situation, it's hard to really see noticeable change. But this part of the country is changing. And it's—you're moving forward. I don't know if you know that or not, but flying in or driving in, there's something different than the first time I was here.

Now, what wasn't different is, this Mississippi spirit is strong. It was noticeable. There is a can-do attitude in the midst of all the trauma and pain. One thing I noticed on my first trip was, "We can do this." And now I'm seeing it being done. "We can do this" means a lot of things. It meant, like Jerry Darden, who's there—Jerry, stand up for a minute—Jerry Darden rescued 20 people out of the flood waters. He represents kind of the heroic action that took place when the storm hit. I met him out at the airport. He said, "I never thought I'd get to see a President." [*Laughter*] I said, "I never thought I'd get to meet a fellow who saved 20 lives."

And that can-do spirit is—these county commissioners—we call them county commissioners—county supervisors and mayors who are dealing with unbelievable trauma, and you know, they're right there on the frontline of trying to comfort people who

hurt. And yet, amidst all that agony and pain, they're going through was this comforting spirit. The can-do spirit is, you know, seeing progress being made. And inside this tent there's a can-do spirit of taking a horrible situation and making this part of the world better. And so I'm impressed.

And I think that when Haley said, "Well, we've got to make sure that people take a look down here to invest," the first thing they're going to look at is not the tax code, but the character of the people, which will give you a great advantage.

My pledge is—let me step back. I really appreciate this commission. I think it's really important for Mississippi folks to chart your path. And I know Gene Taylor feels that way, and I know the Senators feel that way. It's just—you really don't want the Federal Government telling you how to rebuild. What you want is the Federal Government to help you rebuild. You want a partner, not somebody who is going to tell you what the strategy ought to be.

I also appreciate Haley saying that the State of Mississippi and this commission will take into account what the local folks think. Their input is going to be vital. I mean, you've got yourself some mayors and some supervisors who were elected by the people; you need to listen to them, because they're going to be listening to the people.

A couple of recovery items: One, I spent some time—quality time at the Chevron plant in Pascagoula, and I want to thank Roland for being here. By the way, you talk about a dedicated group of people who are working huge hours and long hours, not only to get that plant up and running but to help the community. It was an impressive display of compassion and hard work, and thanks for having me.

But I did hear from the mayors and the county supervisors, and there was a level of frustration, as there should have been. You know, you hear one thing about debris removal, and nothing is happening. Well, I got back, and I called them in, and I said, "Look, part of the recovery, we've got to help these folks have a sensible plan to start removing debris." We worked with Haley. The mayors tell me—I'm a little cautious about laying it out there—but the mayors tell me there is

a plan now in place that is logical and that—where people will begin to see concrete results when it comes to removing this debris.

We've got people looking at the infrastructure. One of the questions I asked in Washington, DC, as the principle party responsible for rebuilding the infrastructure, is, "Have you got your assessment teams out there?" You know, looking at these bridges requires more than just, you know, writing a check. It requires the Coast Guard to look at the spans. It requires the—I think you've got a role, in parts, on the State highways.

I mean, we're trying to help get this recovery going by plowing through the paperwork requirements as fast as possible so that we can reduce the frustration to you. And Haley is right, we have a responsibility by law to help rebuild the infrastructure. You can't rebuild a part of the world without your infrastructure in place, and we know that. And so we look forward to working with you to get this infrastructure up and running.

On the other hand, as Jim Barksdale said, "If you don't have a plan, if you don't have a plan of action, the recovery and the rebuilding will be haphazard." So I want to applaud this commission. In my speech the other night, I made it clear to the country that we expect local folks to come up with the vision. We want the Mississippi people to lay out the Mississippi vision about what this important part of the world is going to look like. And that's exactly what this commission is all about.

When they told me that Haley and Barksdale had invited me to come, I was thrilled, because I think it's really smart and really important to bring capable people together to delegate tasks, to think anew, obviously to utilize that which worked in the past to your advantage, but be willing to think anew, because you've got a fantastic opportunity. We'll get the debris removed. We'll get your water systems up and running as quickly as possible. We'll get your bridges built, but the vision that you detail as a result of this commission is going to be the blueprint for the future.

And so I really appreciate all the citizens who have agreed to take time out of your busy schedules to help plot the strategy for the future. It's really important; it's really im-

portant. And there's no doubt in my mind that out of the rubble and out of those huge heaps of timber that used to be homes, a better Mississippi will emerge.

At any rate, we look forward to working with you. Let me put it another way: We look forward to hearing your vision, so we can more better do our job. That's what I'm telling you.

And so, thanks for taking this on. Good luck. Think bold.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at an outlet mall on Factory Shops Blvd. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Roland Kell, refinery general manager, Chevron Pascagoula Refinery; and Representative Gary Eugene Taylor of Mississippi, member, and James L. Barksdale, chairman, Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal.

Remarks to Reporters in New Orleans, Louisiana

September 20, 2005

Hurricane Katrina Recovery

The President. I want to thank the folks here at the Folger plant for inviting us to come say hello. The reason I've come with the mayor and with Admiral Allen is because I want the people to know that there's progress being made in this part of the world. We've got some people working here because of the ingenuity of the plant managers. Behind me you see temporary housing where this company has provided housing for the folks who work here.

Mayor Nagin. FEMA helped.

The President. And FEMA helped with that. And what you're beginning to see is a revitalized economy. Progress is being made toward meeting the mayor's vision of a—and my vision, and everybody's vision involved with this—of a vibrant New Orleans and surrounding parishes.

The other thing, I've just come from a briefing about Hurricane Rita—or Storm Rita, now a category 2 hurricane—and we were watching very closely, of course, its track. All up and down this coastline, people are now preparing for what is anticipated to be yet another significant storm. Admiral

Allen is going to stay in charge of the Louisiana/Mississippi area. We've got another admiral who is now being stationed in Texas to coordinate the relief, response. We've got military assets that are being taken out of the New Orleans area, out of harm's way, and have come back in behind the storm, to follow up where it's needed.

I've been in touch with the Governor of Texas. I've been briefed on the planning for what we pray is not a devastating storm—but there's one coming. And I appreciate the mayor recognizing that, and he made a wise decision to say to people, "Be cautious about returning here because a flood—a rain of any amount could cause these levees to break again."

But progress is being made. As I said in Mississippi, I was pleased to see the progress being made on the ground. There's still a lot of work, but they're making progress. And they're making progress here in New Orleans too. Again, we've got a lot of work to do, but people are determined to get the job done.

Anyway, I want to thank you for having me. Thanks for having me back. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the Folgers Coffee plant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; Rear Adm. Larry L. Hereth, USCG, commander, Fifth Coast Guard District; and Gov. Rick Perry of Texas.

Statement on the Death of Simon Wiesenthal

September 20, 2005

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Simon Wiesenthal, a tireless and passionate advocate who devoted his life to tracking down Nazi killers and promoting freedom. Simon Wiesenthal lost 89 relatives in the Holocaust, yet he survived the death camps himself. He gathered intelligence to be used in war crimes trials and also passed on important information that led to the conviction of Adolf Eichmann. Throughout his long career, he relentlessly pursued those responsible for some of the most horrific

crimes against humanity the world has ever known. Simon Wiesenthal fought for justice, and history will always remember him.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

September 20, 2005

Dear _____:

Consistent with section 2(10) of the Senate's resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia of May 8, 2003 (Treaty Doc. 108-4), I am pleased to submit to the Congress the enclosed report prepared by my Administration.

This report is classified due to the nature of the information it contains regarding NATO's internal decision-making processes.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Thad Cochran, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry L. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Jerry Lewis, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Duncan Hunter, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 21.

Remarks at the Republican Jewish Coalition 20th Anniversary Luncheon

September 21, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thank

you. Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to join you in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Republican Jewish Coalition. The RJC has been a powerful voice for the values of limited government, free enterprise, and a strong national defense. I want to thank you for your patriotism. I want to thank you to the devotion to our country. Because of your efforts, I really believe America is a stronger and better place.

I'm particularly pleased to be invited to help pay tribute to one of the founders of this organization, Max Fisher. He was a trusted adviser to many Presidents, starting with Ike. He has been a friend of my family's. I was honored to count him as a wise counselor. I'm honored to know his wife, Marjorie, who is with us today. Max Fisher was a man of generosity and accomplishment, a patriotic American, a friend of Israel, and a champion for peace. And he's going to be greatly missed.

As well, we mourn the passing of a great hero for freedom, Simon Wiesenthal. Simon Wiesenthal was a survivor and a witness, who served—who seared the horror of the Holocaust in the collective memory of the world. He's one of these leaders that refused to back down. He spoke with clarity. He insisted that we remember the lessons of the crime. He insisted that we remember that hatred prepares the way for violence, and the failure to expose and confront intolerance can lead to atrocities beyond imagining. As we saw in the recent desecration of the synagogues in Gaza, the ancient hatred of anti-Semitism still burns in the hearts of men. And the best way we can honor Simon Wiesenthal's memory is to expose and confront anti-Semitism wherever it is found. By condemning this hatred at home and abroad, we stand with the victims of the *Shoah* and declare to the world: Never again.

I want to thank my friend Sam Fox. I appreciate your friendship, you and Marilyn. I want to thank you for your leadership. I want to thank Matt Brooks. A smattering of applause out there for old Matty. *[Laughter]*

I see some of the members of my administration here. I thank you all for coming. Don't linger too long. Get back to work. *[Laughter]* I appreciate the Members of the United States Congress who are with us. I

see Senators and Congressmen—thank you all for coming.

I know we got—we've got some statehouse folks here. I think my friend Haley Barbour is here. He was looking for a meal—he told me that on the plane yesterday. *[Laughter]* Anyway, he's doing a fine job as the Governor of Mississippi. Governor Romney is here with us today. I appreciate him being here. Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele is with us—Michael—from Maryland. Thank you for coming. Lieutenant Governor Brian Dubie from Vermont is with us. Brian, thank you for being here.

How about your master of ceremonies? Good to see you, Ari. Thanks for coming. How's the kid? Huh? Good. Good man and a good friend, Ari Fleischer.

I want to thank my friend Lew Eisenberg for being one of the cochairmen of the luncheon—and Elliott Broidy. I appreciate you all taking this assignment on.

You're honoring good people today. Bernie Marcus—I appreciate the spirit of your corporation, Bernie—or your cooperation—your corporation during these tough times. It's remarkable. And I want to thank you for the outpouring of compassion you and your folks have shown. Shelly Adelson, congratulations, Shelly. It's good to see you. And of course, the man who is doing a fantastic job at the RNC, Ken Mehlman.

I appreciate the fact that the Israeli Ambassador to the United States is with us today. He's a good man—Danny Ayalon. Good to see you, Danny.

When I first came here, I looked around, I thought it might have been the ex-ambassadors club. *[Laughter]* Former Ambassadors Bernstein, Price, and Sembler are with us. Thank you all for serving our Nation, proud you're here.

We are a strong and resilient nation. I've seen that strength and I've seen that resiliency firsthand. One of the things that I hope you take comfort in knowing is that throughout our history, we've been challenged a lot, and every time we've been challenged, we have emerged a stronger and better nation. There is no challenge of man or nature that our citizens cannot overcome.

And we're facing some challenges these days. At this moment, our fellow citizens

along the gulf coast are recovering from one of the worst natural disasters in this country's history. Hurricane Katrina caused immense destruction. You cannot imagine what that countryside looks like down there. This storm swept away homes. It destroyed entire communities. It uprooted lives. And today, we've got another hurricane headed for Texas and Louisiana. I spoke to the Governor, Perry. I spoke to Governor Blanco yesterday about the preparations being made for this storm. Federal, State, and local governments are coordinating their efforts to get ready. Mandatory evacuations have been ordered for New Orleans and Galveston. I urge the citizens to listen carefully to the instructions provided by State and local authorities, and follow them. We hope and pray that Hurricane Rita will not be a devastating storm, but we got to be ready for the worst.

The scenes we witnessed in the past 3 weeks in Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana have touched our hearts and have moved this Nation to action. I'm not talking about just government; I'm talking about the whole country. There has been an amazing outpouring of support all across America, and it's sent a clear message to the victims of Hurricane Katrina: This Nation cares about you. You're not alone.

I made a pledge to the people of Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana that we're going to stay as long as it takes. We'll do our job to help you recover. People need to hear that loud and clear. And I outlined our strategy for reconstruction on the gulf coast. It rests on three commitments.

First, we're going to help meet the immediate needs of those whose lives were turned upside down. You got to understand thousands of people had to leave their homes and left all their possessions behind and went to shelters all throughout America. We have a duty to help them. So far we've mailed checks to 600,000—600,000 evacuee families to help them pay for food and clothing and other essentials. We helped them register for other aid that will be available because of laws on the books.

Second, we're going to help the citizens get their lives back together. We've got housing assistance going to evacuees. We understand they can't live forever in shelters.

We've got a strategy to help them go from shelter to apartment, or shelter to home. We've sent doctors and nurses to the region to help.

You know, an amazing thing that's happened is a lot of States have accepted the families—the kids of these families into their schools. What a fantastic gesture of compassion and decency. In our own State of Texas, school district after school district has said, "If you have a child that's school age, bring them to us. We'll help educate them." The Federal Government has an obligation to reimburse those school districts, and I'm going to work with Congress to make sure we fulfill that obligation.

And third, we're going to help ensure that the communities emerge stronger and better. The storm caused huge suffering, as I told you, but it's an opportunity to bring new life to neighborhoods that were suffering before the storm. So I've proposed some interesting ideas, and I want the United States Congress to listen carefully to these ideas.

First, I believe we ought to create Gulf Opportunity Zones up and down the devastated areas to provide tax incentives and tax breaks to get business and jobs back in that area as quickly as possible. If you want to grow something, you shouldn't tax it. If you want to encourage small-business growth, we ought to incent it to grow in that part of the world. Somebody said the other day, "Well, that's a tax break." That region is going to have zero income anyway. There's nothing there, in many parts of it. It makes sense to provide economic incentive, create economic incentives for jobs to exist. We want people heading back there for good, decent, good-paying jobs.

I've proposed Worker Recovery Accounts to help evacuees be prepared for the jobs that are going to exist in that part of the world. Listen, there's going to be a construction boom down there. We want people from that part of the world being prepared to take on those jobs. And so these Worker Recovery Accounts will help with job training.

I believe in urban homesteading. That says we're going to identify Federal property and provide lots for low-income citizens that they'll have for free, so long as they build a house on there with a mortgage or with

the help of a charitable group like Habitat for Humanity.

We've got a fantastic chance as we rebuild. See, when those streets are open, we want them to be lined with businesses, including businesses owned by minorities. When those houses are rebuilt, we want more owners and less renters. When reconstruction is complete, we ought to look back at Hurricane Katrina and say that this country grew not only in prosperity but in character as well.

There's a Federal role to play, and we'll play it. We'll do our duty. But there's also a State role and a local role. I believe as the vision of New Orleans emerges, it ought to be planned by people from New Orleans. And as the vision of that gulf coast of Mississippi emerges, it ought to be planned by the people in Mississippi. And we're going to help them. We'll help them make right choices. But we've got to remember that perhaps the greatest engine for change and growth will be the private sector. So as Congress thinks through its strategy, let's encourage the private sector to come in and help build those jobs and rebuild those lives.

We'll make sure your money is spent wisely. We're going to make sure we make tough choices and set priorities here in Washington, DC. And we're going to make sure that the money is spent honestly by sending a team of inspector generals down there to review all expenditures. That's what the people of this country expect, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

The American people have got a role to play in this effort. And since this storm, our Nation's armies of compassions have rallied and have come to the aid of people who are in desperate need of help. Our charities and houses of worship and idealistic men and women across this country have opened up their homes, their wallets, and their hearts. There's been an amazing, amazing outpouring of help. And the Jewish community of this country has been on the forefront of the efforts.

At Tulane University, the director of the Chabad, Rabbi Rivkin, brought teams of students to New Orleans and southern Mississippi and other communities hit by the storm. He called in folks to help. He didn't say, "Head away from the storm area." He

said, "Let's take it right to the middle of the storm area to help people." They helped rescue stranded people. They distributed bottled water and self-heating kosher meals. They cleaned up and helped salvage homes. They provided spiritual support for those who lost loved ones. And one of those rescued from New Orleans put it this way: In the days after Katrina hit, "Chabad saved lives."

Rabbi Stanton Zamek of the temple Beth Shalom Synagogue in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, helped an African American couple displaced by the storm track down their daughter in Maryland. When Rabbi Zamek called the daughter, he told her, "We have your parents." She screamed out, "Thank you, Jesus." [Laughter] He didn't have the heart to tell her, she was thanking the wrong rabbi. [Laughter]

Jewish organizations have thus far raised \$17 million to help the victims of Katrina. Our citizens are answering the call of the Prophet Isaiah: "If you give what you have to the hungry, and fill the needs of those who suffer, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkness will be like the brightest time of day." People are hearing that call all across the country. And there's more work to be done. I urge you to continue to pay attention to the folks down there by contributing to the Red Cross or the Salvation Army or the United Jewish Communities or B'nai B'rith International or the American Jewish Committee.

It's important. We got a lot of work to do. But when it's all said and done, people are going to realize that this country can respond to crises and help a neighbor in need. This country has got enormous heart and enormous compassion. After it's all said and done, because of the compassionate outpouring of our people, the country's heart, collective heart, is going to be stronger and better.

You know, something we—I've been thinking a lot about how America has responded, and it's clear to me that Americans value human life and value every person as important. And that stands in stark contrast, by the way, to the terrorists we have to deal with. You see, we look at the destruction caused by Katrina, and our hearts break. They're the kind of people who look at

Katrina and wish they had caused it. We're in a war against these people. It's a war on terror. These are evil men who target the suffering. They killed 3,000 people on September the 11th, 2001. And they've continued to kill. See, sometimes we forget about the evil deeds of these people. They've killed in Madrid and Istanbul and Baghdad and Bali and London and Sharm el-Sheikh and Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Around the world, they continue to kill.

They have a strategy. They want to achieve certain objectives. They want to break our will. They want the United States of America and other freedom-loving nations to retreat from the world. Why? Because they want safe haven. They want to topple government. Just think Taliban in Afghanistan. That's their vision. And we can't let them do that.

We have a solemn duty as a United States Government to protect the American people from harm. We have a solemn duty to remember there are generations coming behind us. We have a solemn duty to stay on the offense against these people, to defeat them in other lands so we don't have to face them here at home. And we have a solemn duty to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Iraq is the central battlefield in the war on terror. It's not the only place we're fighting the terrorists, but it's the central front right now. You see, the terrorists want to turn that country into what Afghanistan was. Imagine a place like Iraq, where they've got safe haven to plot and train. That's what they want. That's why they're pouring in there. That's why they're going into the country. That's why they're trying to create instability. They got a powerful weapon—these car bombs that end up on our TV screens. They got the capacity to affect our conscience because we value every life. Every person matters to the United States—people of the United States of America. It doesn't matter whether it's a—living in Iraq or right here at home, we care, deeply. And they know that. And they're trying to get us out of there, is what they're trying to do, for a strategic objective. They want to be able to continue their war against freedom-loving people, with Iraq as a base.

We've got our own strategy. We've got a strategy for victory. Our troops—we've got incredibly brave troops—are hunting these people down and bringing them to justice. We're training the Iraqis so they can fight—take the fight to the enemy alongside of us. Our motto is this—it's important for you to understand—as Iraqis stand up, we stand down. That means as they become more and more capable, it's up to them to take the fight to the enemy, with our help. It's up to them to be on the frontlines of dealing with these people.

We're also going to defeat the enemy because they have no vision for the future that's positive. You can't be successful in convincing people to follow you if your vision is so dark and so dim as that of the terrorists. They have nothing to offer except violence.

We've got something to offer, and that's freedom. And freedom is powerful. I believe this. At the heart of my belief is, one, there's an Almighty; and two, that freedom is a gift from the Almighty God to each man and woman in this world. That's what I believe. Freedom is not exclusively American. Freedom is universal. And last January, the people of Iraq showed the universality of that freedom. Now, it seems like a decade ago, doesn't it, since those 8½ million people went to vote, but it wasn't all that long ago. And a lot of people around the world didn't believe that there was this great desire to be free. And yet, 8½ million people showed up to the polls. They said, "We want to be free. We want something other than the dark vision of these coldblooded killers, people who kill our children and kill police and kill aid workers and try to kill coalition forces."

And now the people have come together in difficult circumstances and written a constitution, and it's a good constitution. It's a constitution written with compromise, not with guns. It's a constitution where they're trying to overcome years of brutality because of a tyrant. And then the people are going to go to the polls again and vote for a government. No matter how many car bombs there are, these terrorists cannot stop the march of freedom in Iraq.

But that march of freedom is not contained to Iraq only. I don't know if you paid

attention to it the other day, this past weekend, but the Afghan people went to the polls again. They had a successful Presidential election. Now they voted for the parliament. It's amazing progress in a country that not all that long ago was a safe haven for Usama bin Laden and his plotters, that plotted the September the 11th attacks.

But freedom isn't—the march of freedom isn't contained in Afghanistan alone. We saw the march of freedom take place in Lebanon, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Georgia. These examples of freedom are inspiring others. Freedom is universal. People want to live in freedom, and the more the world becomes free, those who live in darkness will demand the light of freedom. And as freedom advances, we're laying the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren. *[Applause]* Thank you all. Thank you. Thank you.

This isn't easy work. I see the Members of Congress are still here, halfway through the speech. *[Laughter]* I want to remind you it's not easy, what we're doing, but it's necessary. It's the calling of our time. It's an opportunity to say, "We've done our duty." It's an opportunity to say, "We made this country safer, and we made the world better."

I got a partner in peace in Ariel Sharon. I've been impressed by his leadership. Sam mentioned the time when the RJC flew four Governors—and I happened to be one—to the Holy Land. And we went to a briefing by the Government of Israel then, and one of the Cabinet members was Ariel Sharon. And after the briefing, he introduced himself. He said, "Would you like to go on a helicopter ride and take a look at the West Bank?" I said, "Are you flying?" No—*[laughter]*—I said, "You bet."

It's interesting how history works, isn't it? In 1998, fall of 1998, the future President of the United States and the future Prime Minister of Israel were flying across the—across that country, with him describing to me how to keep Israel secure. A couple of lessons I took away from there is, one, you know, how tiny the country is. You know, a guy from Texas, we got a lot of space there. There's not a lot of space there. How vulnerable Israel can be. I also came away with the strong impression about how strong the

people there not only want to defend themselves, but how much they love democracy, that democracy is a critical part of their existence.

Ariel Sharon has shown great leadership, and he made a tough and courageous decision. He decided to withdraw from Gaza. I'll never forget when he came and told me that. My immediate reaction was, "This is a bold step for peace, Mr. Prime Minister, and I support you." He saw it, and I think I did, too, at the time, that such a decision would really force the world to recognize that only true peace will come when we defeat terrorism and establish democracy.

And so now there's an opportunity, and the opportunity rests with the Palestinian people to show that they can govern themselves in a peaceful way. The policy of this Government is to streamline the security forces so there's only one authority with security forces, and that's the authority that campaigned based upon a peace platform. The policy of this Government is to help entrepreneurship flourish, to help small businesses start. The Arab world needs to help right now. They need to step in and help the peaceful democratic forces within the Palestinian—within Gaza, to thwart those whose stated objective is the destruction of Israel.

The United States of America is firmly committed to defending the security and the well-being of our ally Israel. And we'll work with our friends in the region and throughout the world to achieve the peace that all want. My hope is that someday, there will be two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace.

These are historic times, and they're challenging, but I've got to tell you, I've got great hope, too, for the future. You know, in our response to terror and tragedy, we have seen how great suffering can awaken an even greater love, and we've been reminded there is no evil from which our Creator cannot draw forth greater good. You know, the attacks of September the 11th really causes us to be more determined than ever to defend our way of life. And it also gave us an opportunity to advance the cause of freedom that were previously unthinkable. And out of the horror of Katrina is going to come a rebirth

for parts of our country that will mean people down there will be able to live with greater hope and prosperity—the hope of prosperity—than ever before.

It's such an honor to be the President of a country that not only deals with our adversity but is able to create good out of the adversity we face. And the reason why we're able to is we've got a indomitable spirit, and we've got a land full of people that are incredibly generous and strong and compassionate. And I appreciate being in a room full of such people.

I want to thank you for your friendship. Thank you for the love of America. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon in the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Sam Fox, national chairman, and his wife, Marilyn, Matthew Brooks, executive director, and Lewis M. Eisenberg and Elliott Broidy, members of the board of directors, Republican Jewish Coalition; Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; former White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer; event honorees Bernard Marcus, co-founder, The Home Depot, Inc., Sheldon G. Adelson, chairman of the board, Las Vegas Sands Corp., and Kenneth B. Mehlman, chair, Republican National Committee; former Ambassador to Denmark Stuart A. Bernstein; former Ambassador to Mauritius, Seychelles, and Comoros John Price; former Ambassador to Italy Melvin Sembler; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Rabbi Yochanan Rivkin, director, Tulane University Chabad Jewish Student Center; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama Bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel.

Proclamation 7935—Gold Star Mother's Day, 2005

September 21, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The men and women of America's Armed Forces selflessly serve to protect our Nation, and they are among our greatest heroes. From the trenches of World War I to the beaches of Normandy, from Korea to Vietnam, from Afghanistan to Iraq, many coura-

geous members of our military have given their lives so that Americans could live in freedom and security. On Gold Star Mother's Day, we recognize and pray for the devoted and patriotic mothers of these men and women in uniform who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our liberty.

America's Gold Star Mothers carry a great burden of grief, yet they show a tremendous spirit of generosity in helping their fellow citizens. With kindness and understanding, they support members of our Armed Forces and their families, provide vital services to veterans, help to educate young people about good citizenship and our Nation's founding ideals, and bring comfort to many in need. We commend these proud women for their compassion, commitment, and patriotism, and our Nation will always honor them for their sacrifice and service.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 115 of June 23, 1936 (49 Stat. 1895 as amended), has designated the last Sunday in September as "Gold Star Mother's Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in its observance. On this day, we express our deep gratitude to our Nation's Gold Star Mothers, and we ask God's blessings on them and on their families.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Sunday, September 25, 2005, as Gold Star Mother's Day. I call upon all Government officials to display the flag of the United States over Government buildings on this solemn day. I also encourage the American people to display the flag and hold appropriate ceremonies as a public expression of our Nation's sympathy and respect for our Gold Star Mothers.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:27 a.m., September 23, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 26.

Presidential Determination With Respect to Foreign Governments' Efforts Regarding Trafficking in Persons

September 21, 2005

Presidential Determination No. 2005-37

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination with Respect to Foreign Governments' Efforts Regarding Trafficking in Persons

Consistent with section 110 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (Division A of Public Law 106-386), as amended, (the "Act"), I hereby:

- Make the determination provided in section 110(d)(1)(A)(i) of the Act, with respect to Cambodia and Venezuela, not to provide certain funding for those countries' governments for fiscal year 2006, until such government complies with the minimum standards or makes significant efforts to bring itself into compliance, as may be determined by the Secretary of State in a report to the Congress pursuant to section 110(b) of the Act;
- Make the determination provided in section 110(d)(1)(A)(ii) of the Act, with respect to Burma, Cuba, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), not to provide certain funding for those countries' governments for fiscal year 2006, until such government complies with the minimum standards or makes significant efforts to bring itself into compliance, as may be determined by the Secretary of State in a report to the Congress pursuant to section 110(b) of the Act;
- Make the determination provided in section 110(d)(3) of the Act, concerning the determinations of the Secretary of State with respect to Bolivia, Jamaica, Qatar, Sudan, Togo, and the United Arab Emirates;
- Determine, consistent with section 110(d)(4) of the Act, with respect to Cambodia, for all programs, projects, or activities of assistance for victims of trafficking in persons or to combat such

trafficking, for promoting good governance, or which would have a significant adverse effect on vulnerable populations if suspended, that provision to Cambodia of the assistance described in sections 110(d)(1)(A)(i) and 110(d)(1)(B) of the Act for such programs, projects, or activities would promote the purposes of the Act or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States;

- Determine, consistent with section 110(d)(4) of the Act, with respect to Ecuador, that provision to Ecuador of all programs, projects, or activities of assistance described in sections 110(d)(1)(A)(i) and 110(d)(1)(B) of the Act would promote the purposes of the Act or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States;
- Determine, consistent with section 110(d)(4) of the Act, with respect to Kuwait, that provision to Kuwait of all programs, projects, or activities of assistance described in sections 110(d)(1)(A)(i) and 110(d)(1)(B) of the Act is in the national interest of the United States;
- Determine, consistent with section 110(d)(4) of the Act, with respect to Saudi Arabia, that provision to Saudi Arabia of all programs, projects, or activities of assistance described in sections 110(d)(1)(A)(i) and 110(d)(1)(B) of the Act is in the national interest of the United States;
- Determine, consistent with section 110(d)(4) of the Act, with respect to Venezuela, for all programs, projects, or activities of assistance for victims of trafficking in persons or to combat such trafficking, or for strengthening the democratic process, including strengthening political parties and supporting electoral observation and monitoring and related programs, or for public diplomacy, that provision to Venezuela of the assistance described in sections 110(d)(1)(A)(i) and 110(d)(1)(B) of the Act for such programs, projects, or activities would promote the purposes of the Act or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States;

- Determine, consistent with section 110(d)(4) of the Act, that assistance to Cambodia or Venezuela described in section 110(d)(1)(B) of the Act that
 - (1) is a regional program, project, or activity under which the total benefit to either Cambodia or Venezuela does not exceed 10 percent of the total value of such program, project, or activity; or
 - (2) has as its primary objective the addressing of basic human needs, as defined by the Department of the Treasury with respect to other, existing legislative mandates concerning U.S. participation in the multilateral development banks; or
 - (3) is complementary to or has similar policy objectives to programs being implemented bilaterally by the United States Government; or
 - (4) has as its primary objective the improvement of the country's legal system, including in areas that impact the country's ability to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases or otherwise improve implementation of a country's anti-trafficking policy, regulations or legislation; or
 - (5) is engaging a government, international organization, or civil society organization, and that seeks as its primary objective(s) to: (a) increase efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking in persons crimes; (b) increase protection for victims of trafficking through better screening, identification, rescue/removal, aftercare (shelter, counseling) training and reintegration; or (c) expand prevention efforts through education and awareness campaigns highlighting the dangers of trafficking or training and economic empowerment of populations clearly at risk of falling victim to trafficking

would promote the purposes of the Act or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States.

The certification required by section 110(e) of the Act is provided herewith.

You are hereby authorized and directed to submit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Persons Who Commit, Threaten To Commit, or Support Terrorism
September 21, 2005

On September 23, 2001, by Executive Order 13224, I declared a national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706). I took this action to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the grave acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism committed by foreign terrorists, including the terrorist attacks in New York, in Pennsylvania, and against the Pentagon committed on September 11, 2001, and the continuing and immediate threat of further attacks against United States nationals or the United States. Because the actions of these persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the United States, the national emergency declared on September 23, 2001, and the measures adopted on that date to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond September 23, 2005. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
September 21, 2005.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 1:07 p.m., September 21, 2005]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on September 22.

comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

**Message to the Congress on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to Persons
Who Commit, Threaten To Commit,
or Support Terrorism**

September 21, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism is to continue in effect beyond September 23, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on September 22, 2004 (69 FR 56923).

The crisis constituted by the grave acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism committed by foreign terrorists, including the terrorist attacks in New York, in Pennsylvania, and against the Pentagon committed on September 11, 2001, and the continuing and immediate threat of further attacks on United States nationals or the United States that led to the declaration of a national emergency on September 23, 2001, has not been resolved. These actions pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism, and maintain in force the

George W. Bush

The White House,
September 21, 2005.

**Remarks on the War on Terror and
Preparations for Hurricane Rita and
an Exchange With Reporters in
Arlington, Virginia**

September 22, 2005

The President. I appreciate being back at the Pentagon. I just finished a briefing with Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers and, obviously, members of my national security team, along with Generals Abizaid and Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad from the Middle East, via videoconferencing. We got an update on the wide range of missions being carried out by our Armed Forces.

Before I talk about the briefings and our war on terror, I do want to thank the leadership here in the Pentagon, Secretary Rumsfeld and others as well as all our folks who wear the uniform, for their help in the aftermath of Katrina. We have more than 50,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, including thousands of National Guardsmen and Reservists, on the ground helping the people there. These good folks showed great capacity and compassion for our fellow citizens who hurt. They saved a lot of lives. On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank them for their service.

We now got another hurricane coming, Hurricane Rita. This morning I met with Secretary Chertoff about Rita. I talked to Governor Perry again. I talked to him last night. I talked to him this morning. This is a big storm, and it's really important for our citizens there on the Texas coast to follow the instructions of the local authorities. Officials at every level of government are preparing for the worst. Our Armed Forces have prepositioned troops. We have resources there to help the Federal, State, and local officials to respond swiftly and effectively.

As we meet our responsibilities in dealing with these two significant storms, Katrina and

Rita, our focus on defending our country remains undiminished. Today General Abizaid delivered a detailed brief on the global war on terror, with particular attention on the major battlefronts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Afghanistan, we have nearly 18,000 American troops who continue to serve as part of a coalition that has made extraordinary progress in delivering freedom and security to the people of that proud nation. This past Sunday, the Afghan people took another vital step toward democracy by electing representatives to their provincial councils and the National Assembly. President Karzai described the moment this way: "After 30 years of wars and interventions and occupation and misery, today Afghanistan is moving forward." And that's positive news for the world.

Our mission in Afghanistan is not yet complete. The international community is helping Afghanistan become a lasting democracy. There are still terrorists who seek to overthrow the young Government. See, they want to return Afghanistan to what it was under the Taliban, a miserable place, a place where citizens have no rights, women are oppressed, and the terrorists have a safe haven to plan and plot attacks. And that's why coalition forces and our special forces and Afghan forces are conducting precision raids against high-value targets in southeastern Afghanistan. Our country will stand with the Afghan people as they secure their freedom and become an ally in the war on terror.

As we work to help defeat the enemies of a democratic Afghanistan, we're also working to defeat the enemies of a democratic Iraq. General Casey briefed us about a comprehensive strategy to achieve victory in Iraq. We're going to deny the terrorists a safe haven to plot their attacks. We'll continue to train more Iraqi forces to assume increasing responsibility for basic security operations. Our forces will focus on hunting down high-value targets like the terrorist, Zarqawi. We'll continue working with Iraqis to bring all communities into the political process. Together we'll help Iraq become a strong democracy that protects the rights of its people and is a key ally in the war on terror.

General Abizaid and General Casey extensively talked about how we're going to

achieve this victory. The terrorists are concentrated in 4 of Iraq's 18 provinces. Over the last several months, terrorists have continued to launch suicide attacks and assassinate Iraqis who are working to improve their country. The number of attacks has increased, particularly in the last week, as the terrorists have begun their campaign to stop a referendum on the constitution.

See, they don't care who they kill. They just kill. They kill innocent people. They kill women. They kill children. They kill election workers. And they've had a history of this before. They've had a history of escalating their attacks before Iraq's major political milestones, like the handover of sovereignty in 2004, the free elections this past January, and the drafting of the constitution over the summer.

Recently, Zarqawi, the terrorist, the killer, has called for a total war on Shi'a Iraqis. His hope is to set off a civil war that will divide the country and derail its march to democracy. Today our commanders made it clear, as Iraqis prepare to vote on their constitution in October and elect a permanent Government in December, we must be prepared for more violence.

To defeat the terrorists, we're constantly adapting to their changing tactics and conducting aggressive counterterrorism operations in the areas where they're concentrated. As more and more Iraqi security forces complete their training, they're taking on greater responsibilities in these efforts. Iraqi troops are increasingly taking the lead in joint operations. They're conducting independent operations and expanding the reach and effectiveness of American forces. The growing size and increasing capabilities of the Iraqi security forces are helping our coalition deal with a challenge we have faced since the beginning of the war. It used to be that after we cleared out a city, there were not enough qualified Iraqi troops to maintain control. And so what would happen is, is that the terrorists would wait for us to leave, and then they'd try to move back in, and sometimes with success. Now the increasing number of more capable Iraqi troops allows us to hold on to the cities we have taken from the terrorists. The Iraqi troops know their people; they know their language; and they

know who the terrorists are. By leaving Iraqi units in the cities we've cleaned out, we can keep the cities safe, while we move on to hunt down the terrorists in other parts of the country.

We saw the value of large and more capable Iraqi security forces in Najaf and Fallujah last year, when America and Iraqi forces conducted joint operations to clean out terrorist strongholds. We followed up these successful efforts by working with the Iraqi Government to ensure that Iraqi forces were able to maintain law and order. We worked with local leaders to improve infrastructure and create jobs and provide hope. As a result, the people of Najaf and Fallujah are safer, and their cities are moving ahead with vital reconstruction. And that's part of our strategy to help develop a secure, safe democracy in Iraq.

We're seeking to repeat this success elsewhere in Iraq, most recently in the country's northwest region. This area was the main route of foreign terrorists entering Iraq from Syria and a major concern of coalition forces. During operations in the key town of Tall 'Afar, Iraqi security forces outnumbered U.S. forces for the first time in a major offensive operation. Our joint efforts killed, captured, or flushed out hundreds of terrorists. As a part of General Casey's strategy, Iraqi forces remain in Tall 'Afar to ensure that the terrorists are not allowed to return, regroup, and hold hostage the innocent residents of that city.

Thanks to these operations, we're making it more difficult for foreign terrorists to enter through the northwest part of Iraq. Coalition and Iraqi troops are now focusing their efforts in western Iraq where we're trying to stop foreign terrorists from entering through Syria and prevent Al Qaida from establishing a safe haven in the Anbar province.

General Casey is working with his Iraqi counterparts to restore Iraqi control of this region. And when we have completed this task, elements of the Iraqi military will remain to protect Iraq's border and ensure that the enemy does not return to dominate this region and intimidate its citizens.

To ensure that we can maintain this aggressive pace, the military operations through the election period, we have temporarily in-

creased our troop levels, just as we have before other major political events. As the Iraqi security forces establish control over more and more of their country, American troops will support these forces and continue to hunt down the terrorists in the remaining problem areas.

Iraqi forces are showing the vital difference they can make. They are now in control of more parts of Iraq than at any time in the past 2 years. Significant areas of Baghdad and Mosul, once violent and volatile, are now more stable because Iraqi forces are helping to keep the peace.

Iraqis are providing security in Najaf and parts of Diyala province. In all these areas, the Iraqis are gathering useful intelligence. They're forging alliances with civic and religious leaders. As the Iraqi security forces show they're capable of keeping the terrorists out, they're earning the confidence of the Iraqi people and ensuring the success of a free and democratic Iraq.

Listen, there are differences of opinion about the way forward. I understand that. Some Americans want us to withdraw our troops so that we can escape the violence. I recognize their good intention, but their position is wrong. Withdrawing our troops would make the world more dangerous and make America less safe. To leave Iraq now would be to repeat the costly mistakes of the past that led to the attacks of September the 11th, 2001. The terrorists saw our response to the hostage crisis in Iran, the bombings in the Marine barracks in Lebanon, the first World Trade Center attack, the killing of American soldiers in Somalia, the destruction of two U.S. Embassies in Africa, and the attack on the U.S.S. *Cole*. The terrorists concluded that we lacked the courage and character to defend ourselves, and so they attacked us.

Now the terrorists are testing our will and resolve in Iraq. If we fail that test, the consequences for the safety and security of the American people would be enormous. Our withdrawal from Iraq would allow the terrorists to claim an historic victory over the United States. It would leave our enemies emboldened and allow men like Zarqawi and bin Laden to dominate the Middle East and launch more attacks on America and other

free nations. The battle lines are drawn, and there is no middle ground: Either we defeat the terrorists and help the Iraqis build a working democracy, or the terrorists will impose their dark ideology on the Iraqi people and make that country a source of terror and instability to come for decades.

The only way the terrorists can win is if we lose our nerve and abandon the mission. For the security of the American people, that's not going to happen on my watch. We'll do our duty. We'll defeat our enemies in Iraq and other fronts in the war on terror. We'll lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Since our country was attacked on the morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have known that the war on terror would require tremendous sacrifice and commitment. Across the world, the brave men and women of our Armed Forces are taking on dangerous and difficult work. Some have given their lives in battle. They did so in a cause that is just and necessary for the security of this country. We're grateful for their service. We pray for their families they left behind. We'll honor their sacrifice by completing their mission and winning the war on terror.

I'll take a couple of questions. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Nedra.

Preparations for Hurricane Rita

Q. Mr. President, what are you doing differently with Hurricane Rita approaching the coast that you didn't do with Hurricane Katrina, to make sure there aren't those catastrophic results?

The President. Yes. Well, I think one thing that's different is people understand the need to evacuate more clearly. I saw the mayor of Galveston, Texas, on TV, and she said that the people of her city seemed to have learned one of the lessons, and that is, take the evacuation orders very seriously. And so there appears to be a significant evacuation from parts of the Texas coast, to get out of harm's way.

Secondly, we've got Admiral Hereth on the ground; he's a Coast Guard Admiral. He'll be Admiral Allen's counterpart in Texas. He's there in Texas ready to go.

Like Katrina, we're moving Federal assets to be in position to move in. For example, the U.S.S. *Iwo Jima*, where we were the other day, has left New Orleans and is now tracking in behind the storm ready to bring marines and choppers into place. But that's not really that different from Katrina. We had choppers moving very quickly. In this case, though, we're able to come in behind the storm.

As you might remember, we had equipment that was—had to come across the land, fight through the storm to get there. This time we're going to be able to bring some assets around behind it, which I—will help get people—get some rescue missions there as quickly as possible.

But I think the biggest difference is people are aware of the danger of these storms, and people are responding at all levels of government.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Hold on for a minute, please. Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters]. I'll get you in a minute. You seem anxious to ask a question.

Q. I am, sir.

The President. Okay, well, just take your time.

War on Terror

Q. Why has it been so difficult to catch bin Laden and Zarqawi? And can you really say that you are making progress in the war on terrorism when these people have been, you know, able to stay free for so long?

The President. Yes, I can say we're making progress in the war on terror. If you look at the organizational structure of Al Qaida right after September the 11th and look at it today, you'll see a lot of people have been brought to justice, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, al-Libbi. I mean, there's a series of these folks that had been plotting and planning and ordering attacks. And we have found them—"we" being a coalition. So step one is, there is a coalition. A lot of people around the world understand the stakes, that this is global war against people who've got a dark vision and a strategy to achieve that vision.

Look, let me take a step back. People have got to understand that there is a global network of terrorists who desire to dominate a part of the world. They would like to see Taliban-type relationships in countries around the world. They want to be in a position to impose their philosophy. The best way for me to describe what life would be like is to remind people what life was like for those poor Afghan citizens under the Taliban. That's what—in other words, they have a strategy. We understand that. And we have a strategy, and part of the strategy is to call free nations together to form a coalition, to share information and to find people, before they hurt.

Now, look, they've been successful on attacks. They were successful here. They've been successful in London and Madrid. In other words, they have had attacks.

On the other hand, we've been successful at bringing them to justice and finding some of the killers before they were able to strike again. And so there has been success at bringing awareness to the international community about what we need to do. There's been success about bringing people to justice. No question that some of their leaders are still at large, isolated, however, kind of in remote parts the world. But make no mistake about it, we're doing everything we can to find them. And when we do, we'll bring them to justice.

We're now—a part of that global war on terror is in Iraq. And the reason why is because these killers and these terrorists understand that the spread of democracy is their worst nightmare. See, democracy trumps their view of the world. Democracy trumps Taliban-type regimes, because it's free. Because when you live in a free world, you have hope.

And so that's why you're seeing him—a guy like Zarqawi, who has become a top Al Qaida fighter—using every tool at his disposal, primarily the ability to get on TV screens with a massive suicide bombing, the killing of innocent people. And he does so because they want us to retreat. I mean, the strategy is clear. And we're not going to let him get away with it. We will work for democracy in Iraq. We'll hunt them down. We will train Iraqi forces so they can deal with

those who are disgruntled with the march to democracy.

But the war is beyond Iraq—that's what I'm trying to say to you. This is a global war. Afghanistan is a good example of progress being made. You might remember Afghanistan was the home base for the Taliban as well as Al Qaida. And now we've got a democracy in Afghanistan, and the world is better for it and safer for it.

You bet we're making progress. We've got a lot of work, and this is a long struggle. To defeat this enemy, the United States of America must understand that it's going to take—it's going to take time, just like it took time to defeat other struggles we had, other—to succeed in other struggles we've had, like communism, and it's going to take a while.

But what will accelerate the ability for the enemy to succeed is for the United States to lose its nerve. That's what I'm telling you.

You got a question, sir?

Q. Yes, sir, thank you.

The President. What might it be?

Funding for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Q. There is concern about the country's ability to pay for these hurricanes in the time ahead. Have you prioritized what may need to be cut?

The President. I'm going to work with Congress to prioritize what may need to be cut. The other day I said that we're open-minded about offsets. What's a priority for me is to win this war on terror and secure the country and to help the people down there to the extent that the law allows.

Q. Mr. President.

The President. Joseph [Joseph Curl, Washington Times].

Securing the Syrian Border

Q. Yes, sir. Why is it taking so long to secure the border at Syria? And do you really think that the Iraqis can secure it if the U.S. troops have been unsuccessful to do it so far?

The President. It takes a while to secure the border with Syria because it is a long border that has had smuggling routes in existence for decades. In order to secure a border, it requires cooperation on both sides of the border, and we're getting limited cooperation

from Syria. We've made it clear to Syria, we expect them to help us secure their border and to stop the transit of suiciders coming from other countries through Syria into Iraq. Their response hasn't been very satisfactory to date. I continue to remind them of their obligation.

And so it's a long border. One of the things is that we need to continue to train the Iraqis to be better controllers of the border, and that's one of the missions that General Casey briefed us on today.

Bianca. Nobody named Bianca? Well, sorry Bianca's not here. I'll be glad to answer her question.

Q. I'll follow up.

The President. No, that's fine. [Laughter] Thank you though, appreciate it. Just trying to spread around the joy of asking a question.

Transfer of Security Responsibilities to Iraq

Q. How is the strategy outlined today by General Casey different from what the United States was doing in the past? What lessons would you say have been incorporated in it? And based on that, how much closer do you think we are to being able to turn over full control of the security situation?

The President. It's going to be awhile to turn over full control. Full control says that the Iraqis are capable of moving around the country and sharing intelligence, and they've got a command control system that works like ours, and that's going to be a while. Turning over some control to Iraqis is now taking place. As I told you, there are more Iraqis in the lead—Iraqis are in the lead in this mission for the first time on a major operation.

What General Casey briefed us on was how our strategy of cleaning out the terrorists out of a city and being able to fill in behind or leave behind Iraqi forces, is beginning to pay off. And what hadn't happened in the past was the capacity to fill that void with a capable force that would prevent the terrorists from coming back in.

Q. Mr. President, could we talk more about—

The President. Are you Bianca?

Q. No, I'm not. Anita [Anita Siegfriedt]—FOX News.

The President. Okay.

Funding for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Q. Just a quick question—

The President. Okay. I was looking for Bianca. I'm sorry.

Q. —more about the funding for—with the devastation of Katrina and so forth, and just more on—I know you're going to meet with Congress, to talk about maybe offsets in spending.

The President. Yes.

Q. Can you talk a little bit more about—

The President. The first thing is, we're in the process of understanding how much cost the Federal Government is responsible for, for Katrina and possibly Rita. For example, we're obligated for at least 75—by law, obligated for at least 75 percent of infrastructure repairs. So in order for us to be able to understand what needs to be offset or how we work with Congress on reducing expenditures in other areas, we first have to understand the scope of the request. And so, step one is to understand—is to take inventory of the roads that we'll be responsible for repairing, the bridges we'll be responsible for repairing, the waste water sewage systems we'll be responsible for repairing, the schools we'll be responsible for repairing. And we're now in the process of inventorying the costs.

We have made a decision, for example, to send a \$2,000 check to each family that has been evacuated. We're getting a pretty good handle on the extent of that, so when we speak to Congress—say, that's a pretty fixed amount. We understand how much that's going to be. And so what I'm telling you is, we're in the process of understanding the size and scope of the Federal response, so that we can then say to Congress, "Here is what we anticipate over the next several years the cost will be, and here is our expectations in how we can pay for it, and here are some offsets." And we're beginning to make those kinds of suggestions.

But you have got to understand it takes a while to understand the amount of Federal—the size of the Federal tab in this process. It just doesn't happen overnight. You just don't go down and look and say, "Oh, this is what it's going to cost." It requires an assessment, an inventorying of potential costs.

And that's exactly what we're doing right now.

Another area of cost, for example, is debris removal. See, we know what our obligations are. We just, by the way, cut through a lot of redtape to allow for Federal debris removal from private property if the mayors were to sign a form basically designating parts of their city to be cleared by—private property to be cleared by the Federal Government. Now, we're beginning to understand what that—how much of that territory will be cleared by the Government and what our cost obligation is. And when we get those costs up, we'll be happy to share those with the United States Congress and then work through how we can pay for all this.

Thank you all very much.

Q. Mr. President, when you look at expenditures, do you have the list on the offset side?

The President. No, let me make sure you understand where we're headed. It's hard to work with Congress until we fully understand the size and scope of what is going to be expected for us to pay. And so we're in the process of now gathering that information, so that when we sit at a table, we're not guessing. It's not going to be perfect, but it's going to have some size and scope of what we're dealing with.

Now we're going to have, by the way, have to calculate in the effects of Rita. And once we do that—but it doesn't happen—see, you seem to think that somehow you go down there, and overnight it's clear what we owe. But it requires assessment and inventorying of—like, for example, sewage treatment facilities. It takes a while to understand how many of those need to be repaired and what the cost will be. And that's what we're in the process of doing.

Q. —without targeting expenditures, how about targeting offsets?

The President. We'll work with Congress on that, of course, and—but the point is, is that we're going to work together and come up with a solution that will, obviously, help deal with the budget and—but first and foremost, the Federal Government has got obligations by law, and I want to understand those obligations and the extent of those obli-

gations and, as best we can, estimate the cost of those obligations.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Mayor Lyda Ann Thomas of Galveston, TX; Rear Adm. Larry L. Hereth, USCG, commander, Fifth Coast Guard District; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11 attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003; and Abu Faraj al-Libbi, senior Al Qaida associate arrested in Pakistan on April 30.

Remarks Following Discussions With King Abdullah II of Jordan

September 22, 2005

President Bush. Your Majesty, welcome back. We have just had a wide-ranging and fruitful discussion about the Middle East. I want to thank you very much for your vision of a peaceful world, one in which people are able to practice their religion freely and one in which women are empowered. Your Majesty is a leader, and the United States of America respects his leadership a lot.

One of the things I asked His Majesty to do was to go to visit with Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas, to help in the peace process there, and he's graciously agreed to go. I want to thank you, sir, for taking a leadership role. It will be very helpful to have your voice of reason there to talk to both leaders.

Relations between Jordan and America are strong and important and vital. And again, I want to welcome you and thank you very much for your advice and counsel on a lot of different subjects.

King Abdullah. Thank you, Mr. President, always a pleasure to be back. And thank you very much for always the kind support that you've given me and all Jordanians.

As you said so, we've had some very fruitful discussions on the peace process and Iraq. And I want to thank you again for the support that we have gotten from you for so many years on giving hope to Israelis and Palestinians. And I know that you want to find a solution that Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and harmony, and I hope that, if we can help in that respect, that is a great honor for us.

Thank you for allowing us to see you again, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the Federal Emergency Management Agency and an Exchange With Reporters

September 23, 2005

The President. I stopped by the center to get a full briefing on Rita. We're now facing yet another big storm, and I appreciate the folks here who are working so hard to help the folks on the ground prepare for the storm.Q05

I'm going down to San Antonio to see the prepositioned assets, to understand the relationship—or that the Federal Government's role is to support State and local governments. I want to watch that happen. Then I'm going to go out to our NORTHCOM headquarters to watch the interface between our United States military and again, the State and local authorities. Our job is to assist—prepare for and assist the State and local people to save lives and to help these people get back on their feet.Q05

Again, I want to thank the people here in Washington who are working with the folks in the field to do everything we possibly can to prepare for this second big storm that's coming into the Gulf of Mexico.

Thank you all.

President's Upcoming Visit to Texas and Colorado

Q. Sir, what good can you do going down to the hurricane zone? Might you get in the way, Mr. President?

The President. One thing I won't do is get in the way.

Q. But I mean, how—what good can you actually do? I mean, isn't there a risk of you and your entourage getting in the way?

The President. No, there will be no risk of me getting in the way, I promise you. We're going to make sure that we're not in the way of the operations. What I am going to do is observe the relationship between the State and local government, particularly out in Colorado Springs. That's what I want to see.

See, NORTHCOM is the main entity that interfaces, that uses Federal assets, Federal troops to interface with local and State government. I want to watch that relationship. It's an important relationship, and I need to understand how it works better.

Q. But critics might say this is overcompensation for the response to Katrina.

The President. We will make sure that my entourage does not get in the way of people doing their job, which will be search and rescue immediately. And rest assured, I understand that we must not and will not interfere with the important work that will be going forward.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. at the Federal Emergency Management Agency Headquarters.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Tibor Rubin

September 23, 2005

Laura and I welcome you to the White House. This is a special occasion for our Nation. We're here to pay tribute to a soldier with an extraordinary devotion to his brothers in arms and an unshakeable love for his adopted homeland of America.

Corporal Tibor “Ted” Rubin—many acts of courage during the Korean war saved the lives of hundreds of his fellow soldiers. In the heat of battle, he inspired his comrades with his fearlessness. And amid the inhumanity of a Chinese prisoner-of-war camp, he gave them hope. Some of those soldiers are here today, and they have never forgotten what they owe this man. And by awarding the Medal of Honor to Corporal Rubin today, the United States acknowledges a debt that time has not diminished.

It’s our honor to welcome Ted’s wife, Yvonne; daughter, Rosie, a second grade teacher, I might add—[laughter]—Frank and Lai, welcome. Glad you all are here.

Vice President, thank you for coming. Mr. Secretary, we’re proud you’re here. I appreciate Senator John Warner, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee. Congressman Robert Wexler of Florida, welcome. Thank you for being here. Former Congressman Ben Gilman and Georgia are with us.

Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey; Pete Geren, acting Secretary of the Air Force; “Admiral G,” Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs is with us; General Pete Schoomaker, Chief of Staff of the United States Army. And Rabbi, thank you very much for your blessings.

I want to thank Ambassador Andras Simonyi, the Ambassador of Hungary to the United States, for joining us. Proud you’re here. Yes. [Laughter]

So honored to have the four Medal of Honor recipients with us: Barney Barnum, with the United States Marines; Al Rascon, the Army; Bob Foley, the Army; and Jack Jacobs of the Army. Proud you’re here. Thanks for being here.

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for bravery that a President can bestow. It is given for acts of valor that no superior could rightly order a soldier to perform. And that is what we mean by “above and beyond the call of duty.” By repeatedly risking his own life to save others, Corporal Rubin exemplified the highest ideals of military service and fulfilled a pledge to give something back to the country that had given him his freedom.

Born in Hungary in 1929, Ted and his family were rounded up by the Nazis and taken

to concentration camps when he was just 13 years old. He was taken to Mauthausen Camp in Austria, where an SS officer told the prisoner, “You, Jews, none of you will ever make it out of here alive.” And many did not. Before the war was over, both of Ted’s parents and one of his sisters were lost in the Holocaust. Ted Rubin survived the camp for 14 months, long enough to be liberated by U.S. Army troops on May the 5th, 1945.

These American GIs gave Ted his first real taste of freedom. Their compassion for the people in the camp made a deep impression on this teenage survivor. It was his first experience with soldiers who were fighting to protect human life. That day Ted made a promise to himself: If he ever made it to America, he would show his appreciation to this great land by enlisting in the United States Army. He did move to America after the war, and the young immigrant made good on his pledge. Even though he was not yet a citizen, he volunteered to serve his new nation in uniform, and 7 months after taking the oath of a U.S. soldier, he was sent to Korea.

The conditions were brutal. The fighting was intense, and the bitter cold was unrelenting. And it was in these grueling circumstances that Corporal Rubin impressed his fellow soldiers in the 1st Cav Division as one of the best ever to wear our Nation’s uniform.

Those who served with Ted speak of him as a soldier of great skill and courage. One night near the Pusan Perimeter, Corporal Rubin had been assigned to hold a hill that was essential to the 3d Battalion safe withdrawal. For 24 hours this lone rifleman would defend the hill against an overwhelming number of North Korean forces. By his actions, Corporal Rubin inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, saved the lives of countless soldiers, and gave the unit time to withdraw.

Those who served with Ted speak of him as a soldier who gladly risked his own life for others. When Corporal Rubin’s battalion found itself ambushed by thousands of Chinese troops, the Americans’ firepower soon dwindled to a single machine gun. The weapon was in an exposed position, and three soldiers had already died manning it. That was

when Corporal Rubin stepped forward. He fought until his ammunition was gone. He was badly wounded, captured, and sent to a POW camp. He risked his life that day to protect his fellow American soldiers, and his heroism helped many of them escape.

Those who served with Ted speak of him as a soldier whose many acts of compassion helped his fellow GIs survive the nightmare of imprisonment. As a teenager, Ted had taught himself how to survive the horrors of a Nazi death camp. He was resourceful, courageous, and unusually strong. And in Korea, he drew on these qualities to help keep many of his POWs alive. Whenever he could, at the risk of certain execution, Corporal Rubin would sneak out and steal food rations from the guards, and then he shared them with his fellow soldiers. Throughout this ordeal, he nursed those who were sick back to health and said the Kaddish prayers for those he buried.

And when his captors offered to release him to Communist Hungary, with the guarantee of a good job and nice clothes and plenty of food, Corporal Rubin refused. He said, "I was in the U.S. Army, and I wouldn't leave my American brothers because they need me here." Ted's decision was in character.

As a Jew and non-citizen serving in uniform, he had experienced prejudice in the Army. And he knew that the America he fought for did not always live up to its highest ideals. Yet he had enough trust in America's promise to see his commitment through. He saw it as his personal duty to live up to our Nation's promise, and by doing so, he set an example of what it means to be an American.

Many heroes are remembered in monuments of stone. The monuments to Corporal Rubin are a legacy of life. We see his legacy in the many American families whose husbands, fathers, and sons returned home safely because of his efforts. We see his legacy in the free and democratic South Korea that grew on the soil of his sacrifice. And we see his legacy in a new generation of American men and women in uniform who were inspired to their own acts of courage and compassion.

Today we remember the mother, father, and sister that Corporal Rubin lost to an unspeakable evil. We admire the determination

of a young man who sought to repay his American liberators by following in their footsteps, and we recall the selfless acts that gave his comrades strength and hope in their darkest hours.

In the years since Abraham Lincoln signed into law the bill establishing the Medal of Honor, we have had many eloquent tributes to what this medal represents. I like Ted's description. He calls it "the highest honor of the best country in the world." And today a grateful America bestows this award on a true son of liberty.

I now ask the military aide to read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; former Representative Benjamin A. Gilman of New York and his wife, Georgia; Adm. Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr., Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Col. Rabbi Kenneth J. Leinwand, USA, installation chaplain, Fort Meade.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

September 17

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts and preparations for Hurricane Rita.

September 18

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

September 19

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts and preparations for Hurricane Rita.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with former President

Jimmy Carter and James A. Baker III, co-chairs, National Commission on Election Reform.

The President declared an emergency in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts to assist evacuees from the area struck by Hurricane Katrina and to provide emergency assistance to those areas beginning on August 29 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in New Hampshire and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts to assist evacuees from the area struck by Hurricane Katrina and to provide emergency assistance to those areas beginning on August 29 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts to assist evacuees from the area struck by Hurricane Katrina and to provide emergency assistance to those areas beginning on August 29 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in Rhode Island and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts to assist evacuees from the area struck by Hurricane Katrina and to provide emergency assistance to those areas beginning on August 29 and continuing.

September 20

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea. He then had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts and preparations for Hurricane Rita.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Gulfport, MS.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the U.S.S. *Iwo Jima*, docked near New Orleans, LA. Later, he had a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts and preparations for Hurricane Rita.

Later in the afternoon, at the Folgers Coffee plant in New Orleans, the President toured temporary employee housing. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, in the State Dining Room, the President hosted a dinner for 2005 Presidents Cup teams.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Rick Perry of Texas to discuss preparations for Hurricane Rita.

The President declared an emergency in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storm Rita beginning on September 18 and continuing.

September 21

In the morning, the President had a breakfast meeting with Members of the Senate to discuss the upcoming Supreme Court nomination. He then had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts and preparations for Hurricane Rita. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with members of the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Speaker of the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly Hajim al-Hassani.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a briefing on housing issues related to Hurricane Katrina.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Rick Perry of Texas to discuss preparations for Hurricane Rita.

The White House announced that the President will welcome European Commission President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso for a meeting and lunch at the White House on October 18.

The President announced his intention to nominate Katherine Baicker and Matthew Slaughter to be members of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The President announced his intention to nominate Benson K. Whitney to be Ambassador to Norway.

The President declared an emergency in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Rita beginning on September 20 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Rita beginning on September 20 and continuing.

September 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts and preparations for Hurricane Rita. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Gov. Rick Perry of Texas to discuss preparations for Hurricane Rita.

Later in the morning, the President and Vice President Dick Cheney traveled to Arlington, VA, where, at the Pentagon, they had a briefing on the war on terror.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, the President had another telephone conversation with Gov. Perry to discuss preparations for Hurricane Rita.

The President announced his intention to nominate David Hale to be Ambassador to Jordan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Dorrance Smith to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs.

The President announced his intention to designate Thomas O. Barnett as Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Export Council: Sharon L. Allen; John Sau Chung Chen; James F. Dicke II; Hamilton E. James; Prakash V. Puram; and Timothy Paul Smucker.

September 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on preparations for Hurricane Rita. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with members of the Boys and Girls Club of America Youth of the Year finalists.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Colorado Springs, CO, where, at Peterson Air Force Base, he had a briefing on preparations for Hurricane Rita by officials of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

The President announced his intention to designate Andrew von Eschenbach as Acting Commissioner of Food and Drugs at the Food and Drug Administration at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted September 19

John Robert Bolton, of Maryland, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from July 29, 2005, to September 1, 2005.

John Robert Bolton, of Maryland, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from July 29, 2005, to September 1, 2005.

John J. Danilovich, of California, to be Chief Executive Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation, vice Paul V. Applegarth, resigned.

Eric S. Edelman, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, vice Douglas Jay Feith, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from July 29, 2005, to September 1, 2005.

Alice S. Fisher,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Christopher A. Wray to which position she was appointed during the recess of the Senate from July 29, 2005, to September 1, 2005.

Peter Cyril Wyche Flory,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Jack Dyer Crouch, II, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from July 29, 2005, to September 1, 2005.

Peter Schaumber,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of 5 years expiring August 27, 2010, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from July 29, 2005, to September 1, 2005.

Withdrawn September 19

Terry Neese,
of Oklahoma, to be Director of the Mint for a term of 5 years, vice Henrietta Holsman Fore, which was sent to the Senate on July 29, 2005.

Submitted September 22

John O. Agwunobi,
of Florida, to be Medical Director in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service, subject to the qualifications therefor as provided by law and regulations.

Katherine Baicker,
of New Hampshire, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Harvey S. Rosen, resigned.

David M. Hale,
of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Matthew Slaughter,
of New Hampshire, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Kristin J. Forbes, resigned.

Dorrance Smith,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Victoria Clarke.

Benson K. Whitney,
of Minnesota, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Norway.

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released September 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Maine

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Hampshire

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Jersey

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Rhode Island

Released September 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Florida

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 804 and H.R. 3669

Released September 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of European Commission President Jose Barroso

Statement by the Press Secretary on the opening of the new National Assembly in Sudan

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Louisiana

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Texas

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3169, H.R. 3668, and H.R. 3672

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 264 and S. 276

Released September 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Released September 23

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3761 and H.R. 3768

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved September 20

H.R. 804 / Public Law 109–64
To exclude from consideration as income certain payments under the national flood insurance program.

H.R. 3669 / Public Law 109–65
National Flood Insurance Program Enhanced Borrowing Authority Act of 2005

Approved September 21

H.R. 3169 / Public Law 109–66
Pell Grant Hurricane and Disaster Relief Act

H.R. 3668 / Public Law 109–67
Student Grant Hurricane and Disaster Relief Act

H.R. 3672 / Public Law 109–68
TANF Emergency Response and Recovery Act of 2005

S. 252 / Public Law 109–69
Dandini Research Park Conveyance Act

S. 264 / Public Law 109–70
Hawaii Water Resources Act of 2005

S. 276 / Public Law 109–71
Wind Cave National Park Boundary Revision Act of 2005

Approved September 23

H.R. 3761 / Public Law 109–72
Flexibility for Displaced Workers Act

H.R. 3768 / Public Law 109–73
Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005